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ABSTRACT

The essays contained in this issue discuss some of the recent changes in the English curriculum (including the move toward accountability), the increase in the number of elective courses, and the effect of recent innovations on the future of English as a staple of the high school curriculum. Contents include "The English Curriculum: Fossil, Amoeba or Complex Organism," "Your Own Personal Rx for G. E. F.," "Curriculum Shock," "English from APEX to Nadir," "A Custom-Designed English Program," "Why Not Try Thematic Unit Planning?" "As the World Turns On," "Man in Conflict: A Program Designed for the English Open Space," "Utopia in English," "Interdisciplinary Team Teaching at Alhambra High School," "Is English Worth Saving?" "Accountability English Style," "English, Community Style," "Gamemaking in the English Curriculum," "Some New Questions and Some Old Answers About the English Curriculum," "The Black Idiom," "High School Teaching Revisited," "Implications of Elementary School Practice on Small Group Instruction," "Prove It! I Can't," "If I Had One Wish for Something New, Really New, in the English Curriculum" "Current Reading," and "Shoptalk." (RB)

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SOME NEW WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

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ARIZONA ENGLISH BULLETIN

Spring 1973 - - - - - - - SOME NEW WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

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Preface to the Issue - - - SOME NEW WAYS OF LOOKING AT THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

As Postman and Weingartner remind us in the introduction to TEACHING AS A SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITY, " . . . change--constant, accelerating, ubiquitous--is the most striking characteristic of the world we live in and . . . our educational system has not yet recognized this fact." The world changes and things, all kinds of things, go whizzing past us, and too often as teachers we watch and do little more. Sometimes, too many sometimes, we let things happen to us rather than cause things to happen that might just possibly benefit us and a student here or there. We should have been able to predict the McNamarian drive toward accountability and systems and behavioralism and performance-based certification (or re-certification) long before we did--there were warnings aplenty abounding in our world, but we didn't want to see so we didn't see, and now those evils are with us and to many English teachers it's too late (so they say) to do anything but go along with them and accept them and work within the educational context we have. Whether we fight the ways accountability and performance-based certification and behavioral objectives and assessment and systems have been foisted off on us by state departments of education and the public or whether we go along with them and try to channel them into more educationally productive uses is a moot point, but at the very least, English teachers need to fight or work with them out of knowledge, not out of blind or disdainful or naive ignorance. Ignorance is rarely bliss, and it's usually dangerous. With regard to contemporary educational problems, teacher-ignorance is a deadly-luxury teachers can ill afford.

Hence, this issue where comments on accountability and electives and systems and behavioral objectives abound, not always kind or happy words, sometimes warning words, sometimes frightened words, sometimes placating words, but always words English teachers need to read and ponder. We do, to coin a phrase, live in troubled times, and the times may become more troubled yet. The public has begun to seethe more and more openly about schools where once they were only occasionally and quietly restive. School taxes are rising, kids can't spell the way they used to, innovative programs are introduced in schools where parents see little need for such new ideas and little justification is offered by anybody to anybody else, and the educational streams get muddier and muddier by the day. Words like accountability and assessment and behavioral objectives and systems amd performance-based appeal to many people who are convinced it's about time those schools got their come-uppance and got back to teaching some essentials or basics or fundamentals--whatever they are. For years, Americans have maintained a somewhat uncomfortably ambivalent attitude toward schools, an almost reverent and superstitious feeling that education was somehow magically good for everyone mixed with a fear or dread of intellectualism and teachers. Maybe it all comes out as a kind of "education-is-good-for-you-if-you-don't-take-it-seriously syndrome. Certainly, some people would prefer their own kind of education, which borders suspiciously on indoctrination, into their particular version of reality or the truth rather than an education which gives free play to anyone freely inquiring into anything, anything at all. If English teachers really care about education and developing inquiring minds, they'd better develop some survival strategies of their own, ways of developing better behavioral objectives than those now being given to them from someone on high, or those teachers had better develop ways of combatting behavioral objectives on some other level than blind or ignorant intuition. A good teacher by definition worries about education and his discipline, but mostly he worries about what that education can do or is doing to his students. And what is the effect of behavioral objectives or assessment or accountability on his students? Obviously, the teacher is accountable, but accountable to whom is always the question, and a number of writers in this issue are deeply concerned about accountability and a number of other educational dilemmas and what they are doing to our classes and our students and our schools.

THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM: FOSSIL, AMOEBA OR COMPLEX ORGANISM

Frank J. D'Angelo, Arizona State University

The traditional high school English curriculum is very much like a fossil. Like a fossil, it has become rigidly fixed, petrified, antiquated. Like a fossil, it belongs to the past. It has been unchanged by progress; it is incapable of further growth or development. And like a fossil, its substance has dissolved out, leaving only the form preserved.

The model for such a curriculum is still in widespread use in many schools throughout the United States. It is one that I myself have used and profited by, despite its limitations, when I taught in high school. It is characterized by a rigid structure in the form it takes in the four year high school: four years of composition, four years of grammar, and four years of literature (with vocabulary study and speech and listening thrown in for good measure).

A typical example of the structure of such a curriculum may be described as follows: In the freshman year, the emphasis in composition is on the paragraph--on the topic sentence, on paragraph development, on unity, coherence, and emphasis. In the sophomore year, the emphasis is again on the paragraph, but on patterns of development. There is also some stress on imaginative and creative themes, on paraphrases of poems, and on business and social letters. In the junior year, the emphasis switches to the longer essay, to expository writing, to outlining, notetaking, and to the research report. In the senior year, critical essays, reports, precis of articles, and the research paper are stressed.

The grammar segment of the curriculum is similarly rigidly prescribed. The freshman program consists of parts of speech, verbs, verbals, modifiers, nouns, pronouns, functional parts of sentences, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence diagramming. The sophomore program begins with a grammar review, and then repeats much of the same material of the freshman year. In the junior year, there is also a review of key ideas, but there is much intensive work on analyzing and writing sentences, on sentence variety, on effective sentences, and on sentence diagramming. The senior year is devoted to a pre-college review of grammar and to a general approach determined by student deficiencies.

The literature strand of the curriculum is often determined by the structure of the available textbooks. In some textbooks, the emphasis in the first two years is on genre: the short story, the novel, drama, poetry, biography, and non-fiction. In other textbooks, world literature replaces the study of genre on the sophomore level. The junior year stresses the survey of American literature, and the senior year emphasizes English literature.

The shortcomings of such a curriculum are obvious. In many instances, sequence is determined by the available textbooks. In other instances, the sequence is more apparent than actual because of the amount of repeated material from year to year. Yet the strengths of such a curriculum should not be dismissed lightly. It provides some kind of structure for the novice teacher to follow. And it at least introduces the student to the major concepts and skills involved in the study of literature, composition, and grammar. The task of coordinating these separate strands, however, and seeing them as a unified whole is left to the student, the classroom teacher, or to the university.

If the traditional high school English curriculum is like a fossil, then the

elective system curriculum, currently enjoying widespread popularity, is more like an amoeba. Like an amoeba, it is often characterized by a lack of permanent or supporting structures. Like an amoeba, it moves (and develops) by continually changing its shape. It has no constant form, it is indefinite, and it multiplies by fission. It may consist of twenty separate courses, or forty, or eighty, or a hundred and sixty. And like an amoeba, it seems to have no apparent direction. It moves along in a slow, irregular course, flowing along if it does not encounter an obstacle, changing its flow if it does.

It is difficult to describe this kind of curriculum, consisting as it does of so many disparate courses. In fact, many critics of the elective system would question whether such a loose collection of courses could rightly be called a curriculum at all. Creative Writing, Semantics, Modern Grammar, American Literature, Film Studies, the Mass Media, Science Fiction, Fantasy, World Literature, Comedy, Satire, Literature of the Southwest, the Bible as Literature, Rock Lyrics, Modern Poetry, Basic Study Skills, the Novel, the Short Story, College Survival--all of these courses and more make up the so called new curriculum in many schools.

The shortcomings of the elective system are many. For one thing, many teachers who devise individual courses simply do not plan long enough or work hard enough to impose some sort of logical, or psychological, structure on their materials. For another, the whole idea of sequence, implicit in the very notion of a curriculum, is left begging in the elective system. Why have we suddenly given up on structure? In biology, in anthropology, in psychology, in linguistics, in art, the idea of structure is a central concept of our time. Yet we have barely touched upon its possibilities for the English curriculum. If the elective system poses innumerable problems, it also presents much potential good for the study of English. Quite often, it meets the individual needs and interests of many of our students. At its best, it offers personal value and involvement rather than a detached objectivity. But it is difficult to determine where elective programs are heading. One course merely leads to another course or to a diversity of such courses. Multiplicity merely leads to multiplicity, not to increasing complexity, organization, or sophistication.

If the traditional high school English curriculum can be compared to a fossil and if the elective system curriculum can be compared to an amoeba, then the kind of curriculum structure that I envision for the emerging 70's might be compared to a complex organism. The antecedents for such a curriculum might be found in the work of the Project English curriculum study centers in the early 60's. A curriculum based on the metaphor of a complex organism, however, would be more than a loosely collected aggregate of courses so often found in even the best and most innovative of our new curricula. It would be rather a complex structure made up of interdependent and subordinate elements whose properties and relationships would be largely determined by their function in the whole. It would be more like a living organism, not a fossil; more like a complex organism, not an amoeba; more like a vital animal or plantlike entity having diverse organs and parts that work together in an orderly way.

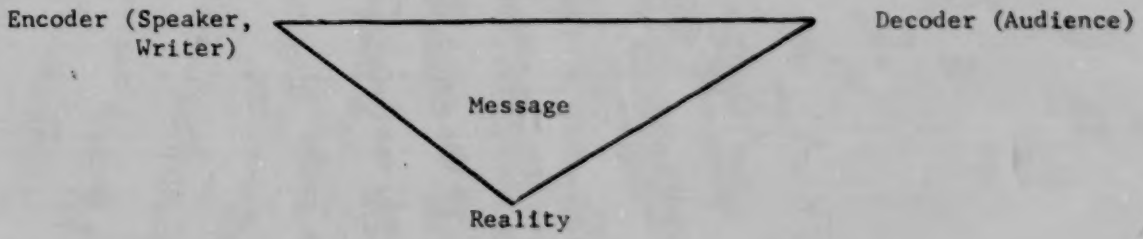
At their best, the curricula developed and tested at such various universities as Nebraska, Oregon, and Carnegie Tech approached this ideal. They were in fact sequential and cumulative, but in most instances only within the framework of a particular strand of the total curriculum. That is, the literature portion may have been sequential, or cumulative, or spiral; or the composition section may have been similarly structured. But more often than not, each strand of the curriculum was worked out in almost total isolation from the others.

The kind of model that I would like to see developed in the schools is one that

uses the general approach and outlook of the curriculum centers of the 60's, but one which is infinitely more complex, and paradoxically more simple, in structure. The model derives ultimately from communications theory, particularly from the work of James Kinneavy with discourse theory (A THEORY OF DISCOURSE). In the rest of this paper, I would like to outline the main features of such a model, using Kinneavy's ideas as a point of departure, but adding to them, modifying them, and extrapolating from them as the need arises. Since Kinneavy's scheme is primarily concerned with rhetorical theory, the ultimate responsibility for the distortions and the uses to which I will put this scheme is essentially mine.

Kinneavy's theory of discourse is basically a theory of the aims and forms of dicourse. According to Kinneavy, the forms or modes of discourse derive ultimately from the aims of discourse. Each mode of discourse corresponds to a different kind of thinking, and each is related to a different view of reality. Furthermore, the reason for the existence of these modes can be found in the human uses of language and the purposes to which this language is put (pp. 36-38).

Kinneavy's theory of modes should not be confused with the more traditional one derived from Alexander Bain, which views the forms of discourse as being basically four: exposition, argumentation, narration, and description. Kinneavy's theory owes part of its theoretical justification to communications theory (p. 18). The aims of discourse and the modes of discourse are based on the four elements of the communications triangle: the encoder (the speaker or writer), the decoder (the audience or reader), the reality (the outer world), and the message (the text or work itself). Let us consider these elements more carefully in the communications model depicted below:



If the speaker-writer's aim is self-expression, then the emphasis is on the speaker-writer himself (the encoder), and the result is <u>expressive discourse</u>. If the speaker-writer's aim is to convince or persuade, then the stress is on the audience (the decoder), and the result is <u>persuasive discourse</u>. If the speaker-writer is more concerned with the reality he is trying to convey, then the emphasis is on that reality, or at least on the ideas representing that reality, and the result is <u>referential discourse</u>. Finally, if the writer is more concerned with the text itself (the message), then the stress is on the internal ordering of the formal characterisitcs of the test, and the result is <u>literary discourse</u>. These four modes--the expressive, the persuasive, the referential, and the literary--constitute the basic forms of discourse (pp. 38-39).

Expressive discourse includes such forms as diaries, journals, autobiographies, memoirs, prayers, protests, conversations, gripe sessions, and religious credos. Persuasive discourse includes oratory, editorials, advertising, propaganda, political speeches, religious sermons, and marriage proposals. Referential discourse may be subdivided into three subcategories: exploratory discourse, scientific discourse, and informative discourse. Exploratory discourse embraces dialogues, seminars, tentative definitions, diagnoses, panel discussions, interviews, and

questionnaires. Scientific discourse embodies literary criticism, history, science (taxonomic categories, descriptive analysis), metaphysics, linguistics, and so forth. Informative discourse includes weather reports, news stories, textbooks, encyclopedia articles, and summaries. Literary discourse, the fourth basic mode, admits of such forms as puns, jokes, songs, the limerick, the genres of literature, the genres of film, and the T.V. drama (pp. 39-40).

The curriculum model I propose is based on these four modes, together with their attendent aims. Below is a modified view of Kinneavy's rendering of these modes (p. 61):

EXPRESSIVE DISCOURSE (Aim: self-expression)	PERSUASIVE DISCOURSE (Aim: persuasion)	REFERENTIAL DISCOURSE (Aim: representation)	LITERARY DISCOURSE (Aim: internal ordering)
Examples	Examples	Examples	Examples
Of Individual	Oratory	Exploratory	Short Story
Diaries	Editorials	Dialogues	Novel
Journals	Advertising	Panel Discussions	Drama
Memoirs	Propaganda	Interviews	Poetry
Autobiographies	Political Speeches	Theories	T.V. Show
Prayers	Legal Oratory	Tentative Definitions	Movie
Gripe Sessions	Religious Sermons	Scientific	Puns
Conversation	Marriage Proposals	History	Jokes
Of Social		Literary Criticism	Limericks
Utopian Plans		Taxonomic Categories	Songs
Religious Credos		Descriptive Analysis	
Myth		Informative	
Minority Protests		News Stories	
Declarations of Independence		Textbooks	
		Articles	
		Summaries	

The above scheme is suggestive in many ways of James Moffett's "Spectrum of Discourse" (TEACHING THE UNIVERSE OF DISCOURSE). Like Moffett's model, the scheme considers the speaker-listener relationship as well as the speaker-subject relationship. It considers the degree to which the audience is removed in space and time. And it suggests a range of continuities from the personal to the vicarious, the immediate to the remote, from subjective response to objective analysis, and from present to past to future.

The rationale for a curriculum based upon the modes of discourse is built into the model itself. The aims of discourse provide the rationale not only for each mode but for the curriculum as a whole. Because the aims of discourse are grounded in the nature of reality, they coincide with our aims in everyday life: to convince, to persuade, to represent, to delight, and so forth.

The examples listed under each mode are suggestive and openended. They can be modified, qualified, added to, deleted, or divided into subcategories. The task for the curriculum maker is to decide on some kind of sequence as well as to determine the specific categories he feels would be pertinent to the respective grade levels. Let me be more specific. One possible scheme is to begin with expressive discourse on the freshman level, move to literary discourse on the sophomore level, then to referential discourse in the junior year, concluding with persuasive discourse

in the senior year. But this linear model distorts the way discourse is actually used in everyday life. All of us use the full range of discourse from day to day. And, as has often been pointed out, there is much overlapping among the modes.

The most realistic sequence seems to be one which considers all four modes on each grade level. The amount of time devoted to one mode during the year can vary, however. For example, in the freshman year it may be desirable to spend more time on expressive discourse (i.e., on self-expression) than on persuasive discourse or referential discourse. Or both student and teacher might decide to emphasize all four modes equally. At any rate, we can envisage a sequence of forms and subject matter ranging from the less difficult to the more difficult covering all four modes.

Let me be even more specific at this point as to how such a sequence might be designed. Suppose we decide to teach the four modes spread over a single school year. If we began in the first part of the first semester with expressive discourse, we would first try to determine the specific categories with which we want to work: diaries, journals, memoirs, or whatever. Then we would determine the kinds of activities appropriate to each level. The kind of material that seems to be appropriate to expressive discourse might possibly be the kind of material proposed by people such as John Dixon, Ken Macrorie, A.B. Clegg, and the like, the kind of material coming out of the Dartmouth Conference, England, the free school movement, etc. It is the kind of material that focuses on self-expression and personal growth. All kinds of speaking, writing, reading, and language skills could be devised in conjunction with these materials so that instead of attending to a somewhat artificial sequence based on literature, language, and composition, we could truly integrate skills, attitudes, subject matter, and forms in a more natural and significant way.

In considering each mode, the teacher should keep in mind that he need not be bound exclusively by rhetorical considerations, despite the fact that the model is derived from discourse theory. For example, in relation to literary discourse, although our primary purpose might be to consider the internal ordering of the text or the aesthetics of the text, we can do this in any number of ways. We can have our students actually write their own short stories, or poems, or puns, or songs, or get them to make their own short films. Or we can have them analyze such materials or discuss them, or translate them, from medium into another. Granted, we may be impinging on other modes when we do these things, but the whole point of such a curriculum is to probe the complex interrelationships that exist among the modes of discourse and the aims of discourse.

Or to take another example. Suppose we are focusing on persuasive discourse within a particular grade level. Because we want our students to understand the nature of persuasive discourse from as many points of view as possible, we might have our students write editorials or examine editorials in their local newspapers. Further, we might even use texts ostensibly designed for some other purpose. For example, John Donne's sermons might fall under persuasive discourse or literary discourse, depending upon how we view the text. Or Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress" can be used as an example of persuasive discourse or literary discourse. THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK might be used to illustrate expressive discourse or literary discourse. The model is open-ended.

I have mentioned previously that all kinds of activities and skills could be incorporated into this model: speaking, writing, reading, etc. So, for example, we could have our students write their own stories, read them, analyze them, narrate them orally, or film them. We can use any kind of signals and any kind of media. We can have students turn a proverb into a story, a gripe into an argument, a bit

of advertising into a piece of satire. A bit of oratory might be used to teach grammar, usage, style, semantics, or whatever, or it may be delivered as a speech or examined as a kind of literary discourse.

Clearly, my comments in this paper can at best be only tentative, exploratory, and suggestive. Nevertheless, the main outlines are clear. The curriculum is based on the four modes of discourse (expressive discourse, persuasive discourse, referential discourse, and literary discourse) and on their attendent aims (self-expression, to convince or persuade, to represent reality, and to delight by an internal ordering of parts). The four modes are to be taught on all four grade levels with increasing attention paid to the more abstract modes (referential and persuasive) on the upper levels. A variety of skills, attitudes, and understandings are to be integrated within each mode. Whenever possible, the complex interrelationships that exist among the modes and among the various skills are to be explored. And more importantly, every effort should be made to point out to the student that the aims of this program, however abstract or artificial they might seem when isolated for theoretical and pedagogical purposes, are in fact congruent with our aims in every day life.

To return now to my original metaphor, I believe that the traditional high school curriculum, the fossil curriculum, is no longer viable because it is too rigid and static, and the elective system curriculum, the amoeba curriculum, is too much of an aggregate of individual courses, to provide the sense of continuity that we need in English. Only a curriculum viewed as a complex organism seems to make sense, in my opinion. The vast proliferation of knowledge in the field of English and the lack of consequent simplifying ideas to unify that knowledge is a grave source of embarrassment for teachers in English today. Scholars and teachers in other fields are bringing a new unity and order to their respective disciplines. Yet we have barely begun to touch upon the importance of structure in the field of English. I am convinced that the next major advance in English can only come about as we begin to see our discipline as a whole, as we attempt to discover the underlying principle or principles that will throw light on everything we do. A curriculum such as the one I propose is only a first step in that direction.

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YOUR OWN PERSONAL R_x FOR G.E.F.

Robert E. Beck, John Swett High School, Crockett, California

Are you suffering from Goals-and-Evaluation Fever? Here's how you can tell. The first symptoms are feelings of disorientation arising from "accountability" rumblings in your administrative channels. Next come chills following prognoses of sweeping reform in your curriculum. The disease reaches the acute stage when it erupts in a rash of demands for behavioral objectives--ironically misconstrued as a remedy for the illness they aggravate.

Effects of Goals-and-Evaluation Fever (or G.E.F., as it is gradually coming to be abbreviated) differ dramatically, but they always manifest themselves most clearly in the classroom. At the one extreme, patients who habitually interpret education as the grim business of force-feeding textbook and lecture material that students must regurgitate upon demand make a swift adjustment to the affliction, considering it a blessing in that it bolsters the euphoric delusion that what they have been doing all along is the definitive approach to teaching. At the opposite extreme, patients who are struggling to find ways to open and enliven their classrooms, to explore unconventional, dynamic approaches to learning, may well find G.E.F. fatal--at least insofar as their aspirations are concerned.

G.E.F. and the common cold are similar in one respect. Although in both the symptoms are fairly uniform and readily identifiable, the viruses causing each infection vary widely from place to place and from season to season. Consequently, no uniform method yet discovered can be counted upon to combat all cases with equal effectiveness.

However, because of the danger of gross misprescription such as the one mentioned earlier, those who contract G.E.F., unlike those who suffer from most other diseases, seem likely to respond best to self-healing. In assuming responsibility for his own recovery, the patient must be extremely cautious not to assume that mere groans and outcries, helpful though these may be in releasing tensions that accompany the disease, can serve as anything more than a palliative. To effect a genuine cure, one must subject himself to a rigorous and sophisticated program of treatment.

In one way or another, the procedure should begin with the building of justifiable self-assurance concerning one's work. Without that, hope for recovery is tenuous. Through reading, conference attendance, discussions with colleagues, and any other means at his disposal, the patient should determine the directions contemporary instructional techniques are taking; diagnose as frankly and objectively as possible his own classroom work in relation to these; and set about employing teaching methods that will enhance his own and his students' successes.

Once he has ascertained that the ground upon which his work rests is actually solid, he will be ready for step two--following the familiar dictum of competitive sports: "The best defense is a good offense." How the offensive will be launched (and against whom) must, of course, be determined by each individual teacher or by his department. But one of the most promising chances for overcoming G.E.F. probably lies in utilizing one's own best teaching methods to transmit the message of his competence and effectiveness to those who infected him with G.E.F. by calling these matters into question in the first place.

The following case history provides one example of such self-treatment. The

system described is by no means a panacea; instead, it is a springboard for original thought and adaptation to the unique circumstances in which any given patient finds himself. The system may be of limited usefulness to those in whom G.E.F. has already reached the virulent stage. It may, however, assist those whose cases are still mild; and it may be especially beneficial to those who are foresighted enough to immunize themselves against the disease.

A couple of years ago, members of the English department at Millard Fillmore High School began to suffer the first symptoms of G.E.F. when they were told that their school administration considered behavioral objectives to be "the wave of the future" and would soon require that all M.F.H.S. teachers prepare themselves to be swept forward by that wave.

These teachers had already familiarized themselves with their state's framework in English language arts; they had read and discussed William Glasser's SCHOOLS WITHOUT FAILURE; they had examined James Moffatt's STUDENT-CENTERED ENGLISH CURRICULUM: K-13; they had attended English conferences regularly and had carried on rewarding educational dialogs, not only among themselves, but with teachers in other high schools as well. Nothing these teachers had read or heard advocated the use of behavioral objectives. On the contrary, the standardized kind of classroom approach behavioral objectives seemed to demand was directly antithetical to the kind of instructional program these teachers were attempting to provide.

The members of the Fillmore English department therefore undertook (a) to re-design their curriculum in a manner which would best serve their students as individuals; (b) to update their selection of classroom materials and methods to accommodate their new curriculum; and (c) to write a position paper explaining why the new curriculum, the new materials, and the new methods did not lend themselves to quantification along behavioralistic lines.

The teachers were disappointed when the only person who would bother to read their position paper was the editor of the state English newsletter, who gladly published it, but who unfortunately had no voice in M.F.H.S. curricular policies. On the other hand, the enthusiasm of student response to the new program gave the teachers a very agreeable surprise. Parents, too, were surprised when their offspring came home talking excitedly about English and showing off report cards with higher grades in English than they had ever earned before. "What is wrong?" the parents demanded suspiciously.

The English department requested time on the schedule of the next Back-to-School Night to offer an explanation of its new program. Only fifteen minutes was made available for the presentation, and the members of the department knew they could not hope to cover such a broad subject in such a narrow interval. Therefore, they decided to confine consideration to the parents' central question: What evaluation system was the department using to report results of its new program?

Each parent present was given a copy of the following item:

QUIZ ON CLASSROOM EVALUATION

1. Circle the letter in front of the statement that most nearly reflects your own attitude toward the purpose of a public school education:
   a. To prepare all students for everything that can possibly happen to them
   b. To prepare all students to make a lot of money
   c. To prepare all students to enter trade schools

d. To prepare all students to enter college
e. To prepare all students to fulfill their own potential as individuals and as responsible members of society

2. If you can think of any endeavors or activities (e.g., sports, skills, academic subjects, etc.) in which all people are born with equal abilities, list them here:

3. Circle the letter in front of the method you consider most likely to encourage people to make their best effort in approaching a given task.
   a. Frightening them with threats of failure
   b. Providing them with genuine hope of success
   c. Assuring them that they will never be remarkable for either success or failure

4. If you agree with any of the following statements, circle the letter in front of it.
   a. There is only one correct way to solve any given problem in mathematics.
   b. There is only one correct way to type a given business letter.
   c. There is only one correct standard dialect of spoken English.
   d. There is only one correct way to express any given idea or emotion in a written English sentence.

5. By which of the following systems would you prefer to have your own child graded in an English course?
   a. On the basis of performance in previous courses of a similar nature
   b. On the basis of the teacher's prediction regarding the likelihood of the child's future success in similar courses taken at more advanced levels
   c. On the basis of a comparison with the class average--for example, the top fifteen percent receiving A's; the next twenty-five percent receiving B's; the third fifty percent receiving C's; and the bottom ten percent receiving D's and/or F's
   d. On the basis of the child's individual effort to learn as much as he can, taking into account his abilities and limitations in the subject.

When the parents had finished marking their quiz sheets, an English department member led a "self-correction" and discussion session. The parents reached general agreement concerning the answers very quickly and, despite the brevity of the meeting, took a sympathetic and supportive attitude toward this aspect of the new curriculum and, through inference, toward the curriculum itself.

A few months later, a citizen's committee was formed at the request of the principal to examine the goals being used in each subject area at Fillmore High. Prior to rewriting its curriculum, the English department had formulated ten goals:

1. To help each student learn to enjoy listening creatively to other people, a process which begins with the giving of honest attention to the speaker; which proceeds with the evaluation of what the speaker has to say; which enlarges through attempts to relate the speaker's remarks to what the listener has previously heard, learned, or experienced; and which culminates in the drawing of independent conclusions.

2. To arouse in each student the desire to communicate his own feelings and ideas fully and freely, to whatever degree that can be done within a framework of genuine concern for the rights of others to do likewise and, at the same time, to be protected from discourtesy or injury.

3. To help each pupil gain and/or develop a reasonable degree of self-confidence

(not to be confused with glibness or brashness) concerning his own competence to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, regardless whether his manner of communication matches the teacher's own dialectal or linguistic predilections.

4. To enrich understanding and enjoyment of literature--its relevance to students' lives, its aesthetic and ethical insights, its humane values, and its exercise of the imagination.

5. To encourage each student to enjoy reading and, because of his enjoyment, to embark upon a course of continuous striving toward fulfillment of his own maximum potential as an individual reader, both in regard to reading skills and in regard to sensitive and sensible interpretations of literature and other written material.

6. To assist each student in relating literature, television, motion pictures, and other communications media to his own life, exercising selectivity concerning what can enrich him emotionally, intellectually, and philosophically, and seeking means by which to synthesize his selections with broader aspects of his life.

7. To assist in developing abilities in composition: basic writing skills, sensitivity to audience, critical consciousness concerning ideas, shaping experience and accumulated knowledge to various written forms, and development of style.

8. To increase language competencies in areas such as pronunciation, appropriate usage, grammar and syntax, spelling, vocabulary, punctuation, and general appreciation of language as a symbolic process.

9. To enlarge students' experience in the areas of library use, independent study, debate, parliamentary procedure, and related fields.

10. To encourage each student to exercise and develop as broadly as possible his fields of interest; his general powers of concentration, creativity, and imagination; his capacity for reason, and his potential for thinking toward constructive ends.

The members of the English department, of course, could simply have reproduced these goals and sent them to members of the citizens' committee for consideration. But it was felt that the goals could be made more meaningful--and acceptable--to the citizens' committee if their presentation were handled in a way that involved the citizens' committee more closely in their analysis.

Accordingly, each goal was reproduced separately on a number of 3" x 5" file cards. The various kinds of cards were collated so that each set of ten would contain one card giving each of the goals. Each set of cards was shuffled thoroughly so that the sequence of the goals would vary from set to set. And each set was bound together with a rubber band.

The English teachers asked the citizens' committee to break up into small groups. Each person was given his own set of goal cards, and each small group was asked to try to perform three tasks: (a) to achieve consensus regarding the basic validity of each goal; (b) to determine whether any goals should be modified (if so, how?) or replaced (if so, by what?); and (c) to arrange the goals, however

revised or replaced, in sequence according to priority order.

During the general discussion period that followed the small-group activity, there were a few minor squabbles over word choice, and no agreement could ever be reached concerning how the cards ought to be sequenced; but there was not a single recommendation for outright substitution, and the attitude of the citizens' committee at the conclusion of the session was more than affirmative: it was genuinely enthusiastic.

Encouraged by its successes in utilizing classroom methods to impart its messages to the community, the next time the Fillmore High School English department encountered a similar problem, its members decided at once to use a similar approach to its solution.

On this occasion, the group was put to an acid test. The school's administrative and counseling staffs were complaining that Fillmore students did not perform successfully in the statewide English testing program. In earlier years the English teachers would have assumed that, given this information, there must surely be something wrong with their teaching, or with their students, or with both. But now, instead of abandoning their new curriculum for a tighter, traditional one, the English teachers asked to see the test. After examining it carefully, they announced their decision to challenge its validity.

All the members of the administration and the counseling staff were invited to attend a department meeting. Everyone present, except the group leader, was asked to take a sample portion of the test (one of the IOWA TESTS OF EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT titled "Correctness and Appropriateness of Expression") under the same conditions and within the same time period, pro-rated, that students were required to take it.

There was a considerable amount of shuffling and grumbling on the part of administrators and counselors when the machine-scorable answer sheets and the number two pencils were passed. There was even more hemming and hawing when the test instructions were explained and the stop watch was set for action. But eventually everyone got to work.

When the allotted time had expired, it was explained how far the "average" high school senior would have been expected to progress. One administrator and one counselor had excelled the average by several questions; two other counselors had kept pace; the rest blushed and made excuses.

Then the whole group examined and discussed some of the test items. For example:

Feb. 17, 1961
1

Mr. Henry S. Davis, Director
2

Camp Toninetka
2

White Horse Station, Vermont

Dear Director Davis:
3

The principal of our high
4

1 A. NO CHANGE
B. February 17, 1961
C. (Both answers are correct, but other important information should follow the date.)
D. (Only answer B is correct, but other important information should precede the date.)

(What was that they told us in teacher education about starting a test with a relatively simple question in order to help students becom accustomed to the test format and to give them encouragement?)

school Dr. Herbert Truex has informed me that
5
this summer Camp Toninetka has several openings for
6 (Try to achieve consensus on this
junior counselors. one at your next English department meeting!)

The following people will be glad to serve as
references for me--
18

Dr. Stanley Connors
First Methodist Church
Rockford, New York

Mr. William Duncan
144 Main Street
Rockford (3), New York
19

6 A. NO CHANGE
B. in the summer
C. during the summer
D. (Place at the end of this sentence.)

18 A. NO CHANGE C. me:
B. me. D. me,

19 A. NO CHANGE
B. Rockford 3, New York
C. Rockford (3) New York
D. Rockford, 3, New York

The administrative and counseling staffs made at least as many "errors" on the test as the English teachers did. In their own defense, the counselors began to reveal heretofore hidden facts and opinions about the test: The process used in standardizing the test was, at best, suspect. There were notable discrepancies between results of this test and results of composition tests, the latter indicating considerably higher competency levels than the former. Some of the brightest students in last year's graduating class had adamantly refused to take the test at all; other students, less bright, had simply drawn designs on the answer sheet or had filled in all the blanks marked A (NO CHANGE). Even so, statewide norms for the test were only a few decimal points higher than that at Millard Fillmore.

"Besides," the vice-principal finally blurted, "a lot of these questions depend on guessing what the test-maker had in mind. They're matters of taste, not 'correctness'--whatever that is!"

* * *

Early this year the time came for "the wave of the future" to sweep Millard Fillmore High School students to dazzling new heights of academic success.

Other departments, which had been playing grasshopper to the English department's ant, belatedly began to bestir themselves. "It's ridiculous and unreasonable," they began to say, "to ask any teacher to strap his students to the Procrustean bed of behavioral objectives." Nevertheless, the principal was adamant about asking for such statements from everyone on the staff.

The efforts of the English teachers, however, were finally rewarded when the school board agreed to hear their long-ignored position paper. There was little else the school board could do in light of the widespread community support for the English program. The principal was specifically requested to exempt the English department from the obligation to write behavioral objectives "because of these teachers' outstanding creative work in curriculum development."

Word got around quickly. Teachers from other schools began to invite Fillmore High English department members to come and tell how they had escaped the b.o. straitjacket. The Fillmore English teachers agreed to go providing they would be allowed to demonstrate their ideas, workshop style, rather than lecture about them. They drew upon the actual experiences that have been described here, pulling them all together into a series of role-playing activities, and wrote an outline for what they called their "Micro-Mini-Course" fashioned exactly after the student-centered curriculum they had devised for their own high school courses. These course outlines are unusual in that they address themselves directly to the students enrolled rather than to the principal or to a bottom desk drawer. The course outline for the "Micro-Mini-Course" reads as follows:

SPREADING THE WORD: A MICRO-MINI-COURSE IN EDUCATIONAL GOALS AND EVALUATION

General Description

Goals and evaluation in education are receiving a great deal of special attention in our public schools. Should you as a teacher simply remain on the sidelines and let other people make the decisions on such matters for you? Or is it your professional responsibility to formulate goals and evaluation systems appropriate to your own work? If the latter is the case, can you use methods you presumably utilize in your own classroom to gain beyond-the-classroom support for the goals and evaluation systems you consider valid?

Spreading the Word invites you to work with your colleagues in seeking answers for these questions.

Objectives

To encourage you to use your imagination, to think, and to speak.
To invite your participation in activities that you might adapt to your own uses as you deal with
a. a community committee on educational goal setting.
b. grading policies in your own classroom.
c. interpreting the validity of state-mandated tests.
d. evaluating your own effectiveness as a teacher as well as your pupils' progress without the use of behavioral objectives.
To suggest ways in which you could become an active participant in shaping beyond-the-classroom attitudes toward teaching and learning in your special field or at your grade level.

Activities and Experiences

You will be called upon to participate in a simulated community meeting on setting instructional goals (in this case, for English).
You will be invited to participate in an experience that could be adapted for use during your own next Back-to-School Night.
You will be asked to look at a state-mandated test from a student's viewpoint.
You will be shown in action one example of a non-behavioral approach to educational goal setting and evaluation.

Resources and Materials

Relevant books and articles you have read prior to this course
Materials distributed during the course
A bibliography of classmates' recommendations, which you may record here:

Demands Upon Your Time

The one and one-half hours the course requires to complete
Time you decide to use after the course is finished to adapt its principles to your own needs

At the conclusion of each "Micro-Mini-Course" (just as they do at the conclusion of the courses they teach their own students at Fillmore High), the teachers requested a final evaluation from each participant:

END-OF-COURSE EVALUATION

Spreading the Word

	WERE YOU GIVEN THIS OPPORTUNITY?		HOW DO YOU RATE YOUR SUCCESS?		
Were you encouraged--	yes	no	good	fair	poor
--to use your imagination?	___	___	___	___	___
--to think?	___	___	___	___	___
--to speak?	___	___	___	___	___
Were you invited to participate in processes you could adapt for your own use in dealing with administrative or community groups concerned with--					
--establishment of educational goals?	___	___	___	___	___
--a philosophy of evaluation (grading) in the classroom?	___	___	___	___	___
--evaluation of a state-mandated testing instrument?	___	___	___	___	___
Were you called upon to participate in a simulated community meeting on setting instructional goals?	___	___	___	___	___
Were you given a student's-eye view of a state-mandated test?	___	___	___	___	___
Were you shown in action one example of a non-behavioral approach to evaluating teacher and pupil effectiveness?	___	___	___	___	___
Were you shown a few approaches to "spreading the word" about your own attitude toward educational goals and evaluation?	___	___	___	___	___

ADD ANY COMMENTS YOU MAY WISH TO MAKE:

The purpose of these "Micro-Mini-Courses" was not to persuade any participant to imitate anything the Fillmore English department has been doing, but to encourage the participants to do something besides quake and shudder when the subject of goals and evaluation is brought up.

Anybody who is acquainted with recent literature concerning goals and evaluation can point to a dozen more thorough and more systematic statements on the subject than this and can perhaps employ those statements to debate the subject with greater eloquence than did the teachers in this case history. But who, besides other English teachers, is going to devote the time and energy needed to read such statements or to listen to such oratory? By simulating various classroom situations, by making use of some of the techniques at which teachers are most adept, we have at least a fighting chance to stave off the worst torments of Goals-and-Evaluation Fever.

Here's wishing you good luck in concocting your own prescription for combatting the disease.

CURRICULUM SHOCK

Nancy Dodd, Apollo High School, Glendale, Arizona

Is your English department suffering from "Curriculum Shock?" Are you faced with fragmentation of planning? Mobility of teachers and students? Over-choice? Are you living in yesterday's world and facing tomorrow?

Time was when a handful of boys and girls huddled in one room to learn all they could about everything, year after year, until their parents pulled them out of school to work permanently in the fields, happy they could read and write.

Then followed the days of the small high schools, where one English teacher taught all four levels, with a class or two of journalism or speech thrown in. Neither the teacher nor the students changed from year to year, except that some of the students moved up the line and graduated. A great amount of formal planning wasn't necessary; instead, with mental exercise, since each teacher knew exactly what skills which students possessed from previous years and what material had been covered, the teacher continued on, up a spiral curriculum, building each step along the way as the students grasped the previous one.

With increased population came consolidation, and bigger school districts organized into curriculum guides material to be taught at each level along the way, assuming each teacher to be successful with each student. The business community mandated a high school diploma for almost every employee, and thus the student population changed its complexion, and success at every step was no longer a fact of life: students who didn't "make it" no longer dropped out.

Then, time exploded. Mobility set in. Families changed residences. Faces changed on the campus. The typical teacher no longer stayed on the job year after year, in the same town, teaching sons and daughters of ex-students. Roll books began to expand greatly with name changes; drop-ad lists became a way of life.

Basic curriculum plans, brilliant in theory though they may have been, fell apart in practice. These documents, citing specific material for each level, no longer meet the needs of Joan, who arrives in October from the east coast, where they perhaps had covered the same material the previous year; or Ken, who arrives in January from another state, and who could not possibly cope with the bulk of the material because he has not mastered basic skills, or the diversified school population coming from several elementary schools, not all in the same district, where many different areas of "English" were covered with different emphases.

In addition, many students never actually go through the curriculum as set out. They drift from school to school, picking up a course here, another there. Patti arrives and enrolls in the nebulous "English 3-4" because she is classified as a sophomore, and she finds that, in this new school, English 3-4 is a study of American Literature. Now December, chronologically the class has arrived at Emerson and Thoreau. They often refer to material from the Colonial and Revolutionary eras, of which Patti has no concrete knowledge. She struggles valiantly, perhaps winning, perhaps losing. Off goes Dad to a new job and she arrives at another school for her junior year, only to find that American Literature is the subject of the nebulous "English 5-6."

Our stationary way of life in America has died! Perhaps curriculum planning

as we know it today should meet its demise also. Can we begin to think in terms of skills and areas of learning, structuring our discipline in much the same way as other departments are organized?

In Mathematics, Algebra 1-2 is clearly defined, and in all schools approximately the same curriculum is covered. Geometry is taught by a math teacher, one who doesn't have the option to teach Algebra 1-2 in his Geometry class. A science teacher teaches either biology, chemistry, physics, and so forth. She takes specialized courses in these areas in college, selecting a major field WITHIN the field of science.

On the other hand, an English teacher has many options, most of which he exercises. English is not divided up reasonably and logically in most schools. "English" is taught, and some students read the same stories or see the same films as supplementary material year after year.

To compound the problem, teachers do not specialize in <u>any</u> one of the language or communication sub-divisions, but in <u>only</u> one of them: literature. In colleges and universities, "English" majors take literature courses, with an occasional required course or two, perhaps in prose writing or modern grammar. Semantics is largely ignored, History of the English Language might be offered, reading and speech are merely options available. And thus we go - into a high school system - mimicking the system which produced us, while a great many of our students do not possess the basic skills and we know little about giving them this knowledge nor in most cases are we organized to do so.

A new trend, elective courses, is a step in the right direction. To the extent that these classes organize and specify content that will be taught, they begin the process of organization within the discipline. To the extent that students are put into them, ready or not, and that we graduate these students via their selected literature courses without their acquiring basic skills in certain areas, perhaps they need closer examination.

But first, let's go back to the nebulous "English." Can we perceive of it divided into two major aspects: practical, logical communication versus literature. Communication, through speech and writing, can be roughly divided into semantics, reading, writing, speech; all of these are roughly language, or the sum total of use and meaning of words. Literature and drama, on the other hand, are forms of art, creative expressions embodying language. It's about time that we begin to look at literature as an art form which uses language. We desperately need the arts, the humanities, perhaps today more than ever. But, perhaps "words" isn't John's bag. Maybe he will paint or sculpt his future bag on the American horizon. Maybe music gives him greater insight into life than words could ever do.

Students need desperately to be able to communicate creatively through art, but does it have to be in words? Can't a student be considered educated, even if he hasn't read Shakespeare, Pope, Twain or Virgil, but he digs Bach and Bartok instead?

To wind our way back to our earlier problem, curriculum planning, maybe we need to look at the needs and desires of our students. We know students need the arts, the humanities, but they also need to develop basic skills in order to survive in today's world, and in order to appreciate the arts, skills such as: prose writing, including letters and memos; speaking on their feet; reading contemporary printed matter, such as newspapers and magazines; viewing television and films with insight; scan reading; thinking logically, sorting fact from

fiction and recognizing propaganda which bombards them daily; researching data; to name a few.

Some students come into high school possessing many of these skills. If they were as accomplished in Algebra 1-2 upon entering high school, they were given one year of credit in the math program and put into Geometry. However, we put them into "English 1-2". These skills should be given to the student as quickly as possible, as "high school survival" material, presented in the freshmen-sophomore years in a well-coordinated program. To all students? No, to those students who do not possess them upon entering. Literature should not be kept out of this program, but it should be a part of the total program, not the total program.

Going back to the earlier idea of differing capabilities and mobility of students, how can we accomplish this? The structured curriculum plan will not be the answer. It is not enough to advise each teacher to teach these various skills to his students. We bore those who have them and we don't set aside enough time to really get the job finished with those who learn at a slower rate. In this mobile age, a progressive block system is needed which sets up areas of learning and measures accomplishment of specific skills.

For example, one could start with mass media as a diagnostic course as well as a course to teach skills and information. That could then branch into mini courses in specific areas, such as: speech; research and composition; language study; contemporary reading; basic literature study. Students could pre-test out of any course at the end of the first course, mass media in this example, if they are capable of so doing.

An incoming student could be tested immediately to see at which point in the block program she should enter and then be programmed through the necessary skills-building courses, along with the present student population. In the new open-concept schools, students could float more readily between teachers, with records kept on information cards for each student. In traditional classrooms, students can be assigned for specific time periods and, when finished, can select their own literature to read for the balance of the time.

Students who enter with skills in hand can proceed directly into elective courses, or students who master the skills at a rapid rate could proceed into the elective program at the end of their freshman year. Students who enter with the skills can be given credit for English 1-2, if it is the policy of the district, or can be given an elective in lieu of English 1-2.

If more than two years were required for a student to accomplish the block program, she could not be any worse off than at present, where she would have failed a minimum of one semester, and probably more. In this system, she would merely have to repeat or extend time in a specific block, often less than a semester. Grades could be determined by how much total material a student mastered within a given time.

Another beneficial feature of this program is that if remedial work is required, it is given in the freshman year and thus the student has a greater chance to perform positively in other subject areas at an earlier time, with the possession of basic reading, writing, organizing skills as well as increased vocabulary.

Sound deadly dull? It doesn't have to be. If teachers can spend time preparing one or two areas of English curriculum, to be presented several times during

a year, instead of the whole gamut of areas, finding an interesting manner of presentation that will capture and motivate the students, and if other factors change - the bored students are removed; students know they will finish when they master the material, not on some specific date; positive self-images begin to build - then perhaps we can reach a goal of student learning EVERY day.

Geometry students don't come into Geometry bored because they already know most of it, or they don't come into a class where they cannot possibly achieve. Why can't we do the same for English students?

Most of us are in a state of Curriculum Shock right now. Instead of over-choice, why not planned choice? Within literature, does it matter if a student reads Science Fiction, poetry, drama or world literature, as long as he reads with insight? Let's give him that choice.

But, let's give him the skills with which to read with insight. Let's work toward responsibility to the students who have achieved basic skills and not insist they stay at a lower level and stagnate.

Testing is a powerful weapon that we hang over the heads of students. Let's begin to think of it as a powerful diagnostic tool on a grand scale, and let's begin to think of our jobs as diagnosticians as well as teachers, planning meaningful learning for each student - anywhere from basic skills to interdisciplinary humanities studies - to fit each student's desires and capabilities.

ENGLISH FROM APEX TO NADIR: A NON-ELECTED, OMNI-PHASED OPINIONATED, UNTESTED ORAL EXAMINATION OF WHAT'S UP--AND DOWN

Fdmund J. Farrell, Assistant Executive Secretary, NCTE

(Speech originally given at the fifth annual conference on teaching English in the Southwest, Tempe, March 1972. First printed in the ENGLISH RECORD and reprinted with the permission of the editor of the ENGLISH RECORD.)

At the outset, let me confess that I am a suspect speaker. Inviting me to evaluate objectively the present movement toward ungraded, multi-phased elective programs is somewhat akin to inviting the president of Standard Oil of New Jersey to provide a non-partisan evaluation of the objectives and program of Environmental Action.

In that I have been and am an editor of hard-cover anthologies of literature, in that the present level of affluence my family enjoys has been contingent on the sale of said anthologies, in that the level of affluence my family would like to enjoy is dependent on the future sale of said anthologies, I am not to be trusted. When I further aver that dollar-for-dollar the hardback anthology has been and is, at least for the immediate future, the best buy for secondary departments of English; when I suggest that the hardback anthology can be a core means of providing for individual, small group, and large group instruction; when I suggest that many of the options that we now provide students through elective programs can be provided through intelligent use of hardback anthologies; when I assert that my experience has been that far more care goes into the compilation of, and editorial materials for, hardback anthologies than into many of the elective courses now extant, then I have virtually--but not entirely, as you shall see-- ruled myself off the bandwagon.

I promise not to say anything more about hardback anthologies, traditional or avant garde. I feel that I have now done right by that much maligned repository of the beautiful and true, as well as by my family and my conscience. Those of you not yet swinging with mini or maxi electives, who feel sorely saddled with anthology-based programs, may call on me at some future date to deliver my companion opus to today's offering: "English from Scott to Foresman, an Elected, Biased Survey on How Best to Use Anthologies So That We Each Can Get the Most from Your Dollar."

My uneasiness about elective programs in general arises from my feeling that they want at present a clear rationale, a theory broad enough to encompass necessary diversity of courses and programs but clear enough to justify or disallow on theoretical grounds proposed courses or programs.

I do not wish to imply that programs of English that preceded the current vogue were sufficiently rationalized, for clearly they were not: from a series of conferences in 1958 attended by representatives of Modern Language Association, National Council of Teachers of English, American Studies Association, and College English Association emerged a list of basic issues in the teaching of English, foremost of which was "What Is English?" a query inadequately answered in the early 1960s with the tripartite division of our subject into language, literature, and composition. Many of us sensed that the first leg of the tripod, language, subsumed the other two legs, that literature was an artifact of language and that composition was a variety of linguistic skills available to a writer or speaker who wished to organize his ideas most effectively for particular audiences on particular occasions. Too, the tripod ignored the burgeoning interest in the non-verbal art of the still and the motion picture.

Despite its transparent weaknesses, the division of English into language, literature and composition did provide us a sense, pseudo perhaps, of having come to some agreement about what legitimately might be called English. The consequence of that sense of concurrence was that we spawned committees in NCTE concerned with articulation of English from elementary school to high school to college. But the problem of informing each other on a vertical axis about what we are teaching has given way to the problem of keeping those on the horizontal axis informed: with the shift to multiple elective programs a teacher of English may no longer know what his colleagues in the same department in the same school are doing. Worse, he may not be informed why they are doing what they are doing.

Without a sound educational rationale to undergird a program of multiple electives, a department of English almost invites a public attack on the worthiness of English to be a required subject in the schools. As long as we labeled our courses with such verbal Rorschachs as English I, English II, or Junior English, Senior English, we were in no trouble: parents believed we were teaching the eternal verities of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and Latinate grammar, with occasional pedagogical sallies into the pages of the Great Literature of the Western World. We did not misinform the public about the content and teaching of English; we just failed to inform them, with the consequence that they permitted us to do our unmolested things. But when kids start bringing home transcripts with such course titles for English as "Sports," "Mysteries," "Science Fiction," "The Political Animal," "Man's Humanity to Man," "World of Fancy," "Change Phases," "Development of the Movies," "Psychology of Mass Media," "Black Literature," and "Theatre Workshop"--all titles I have culled from outlines of existing elective programs--then we had better be prepared to be challenged by parents asking why in hell we are teaching these courses and how we justify our requiring students to take three or four years of English in order for them to be graduated. And if we do not want to justify English as a compulsory subject, and certainly philosophical and psychological arguments can be advanced for its abolition as a requirement, then we must be prepared for a possible reduction in our ranks. In an open educational marketplace, we may painfully learn that neither our personalities nor our fragmented subject radiate the magnetic appeal we would want for both.

Allow me to pause here to assure you that I do not mean to demean any course by its title alone. Further, I fully understand the present attractiveness of multiple-elective programs for teachers as well as for students. With electronic media girding the earth and shrinking it to the size of McLuhan's global village, with the exponential rise of literatures in translation, with the volatile proliferation in the past few decades of linguistic studies, with the claims of late rightfully made on the curriculum by minority groups whose literatures had scandalously been ignored, no teacher of English could continue to presume that Faustian grasp of his subject which once had allowed him to teach, or to try to teach, all things to all men. Specialization, the right to carve out a corner of the universe of available choices and claim it as one's own turf, was probably inevitable. My argument is less against specialization than it is against uninformed or misinformed specialization, specialization that disregards adolescents and the rhythms and requirements of their academic, psychological, and social growth; specialization that is unmindful of the social/economic/political/technological matrix that molds curriculum today; specialization that is so global as to be meaningless or so preciously narrow as to be insignificant to our times, a period which, because of present and anticipated problems with population, pollution, and weaponry--to name but three--has evoked doubts about whether man as a species can exist much beyond another century; specialization that fosters prima donnas unwilling to assume in courses they teach their share of responsibility for the teaching of composition and language.

I would like to be selectively unfair for a few moments and read to you descriptions of some courses offered in elective programs which had come to the attention of NCTE/ERIC. In September, 1970, Linda Kubicek Harvey of the ERIC Clearinghouse of the Teaching of English compiled fourteen descriptions of elective English programs in junior and senior high schools; in April, 1971, she compiled an additional eleven descriptions. Though the majority of courses could by inference be justified as legitimately germane to the subject of English broadly conceived, almost all programs lacked a rationale for their offerings and virtually no program had built into it carefully designed methods of continuing evaluation, a weakness, incidentally, in the APEX program, according to George Hillocks, Jr., in AN EVALUATION OF PROJECT APEX: A NONGRADED PHASE-ELECTIVE PROGRAM (Trenton Public Schools, Trenton, Michigan, 1971). I will be flippant as well as unfair by providing my own labels for some of the offerings in the programs compiled by Mrs. Harvey.

1. The Ego-Trip, a course offered by a teacher whose dillantantism blinds him to the important areas of his subject and to the interests and abilities of the adolescents seated before him:
   a. The Lost Generation: "A study of the new generation which emerged after the First World War. Stein, Hemingway, Ford, Fitzgerald, and Picasso may be considered as to their position in the development of literature and the arts, qualities of style, techniques, attitudes, and philosophical ideas."
   b. Humanities V: French Free Spirit "The purpose of this course will be to examine the free spirit of the French culture as expressed in literature and art." (To which I feel compelled to add at least one subdued "Ooh, la, la.")
   c. The Beat Generation: "The beat generation was composed of those writers who emerged from the conscientious objector camps in the Big Sur at the end of World War II, studied at Berkeley and Black Mountain, and later congregated in groups in such cities as Paris, San Francisco and New York. Jack Kerouac was their spokesman and Allan (sic) Ginsberg their prophet. This course will define and examine the values of the beat generation through selected readings from the writing of its members, especially those associated with the San Francisco Renaissance."
2. At the opposite horizon from him who rides his hobby horse is the teacher who sits atop a colossus, taking into his purview all of life and literature. The course he offers is one I have chosed to call The Civilized Sweep.
   a. Introduction to Literature: "In this course, students will learn how to handle literature as an Art, as entertainment, and as a way of learning about other people. Emphasis will be on learning how to read and deal with the various literary forms: Poetry, drama, short story, novel, essay, film. Students will learn to develop criteria for judging the relative value of literary content. . . .Length of course: one semester."
   b. Introduction to the Humanities: "This course is designed as a student-centered approach to the study of Humanities. By focusing on specific men, themes, events, cities or periods of time, students will explore the dignity of man and his relations with nature, other men and within himself. To understand and appreciate their own positions in society, students will explore man's thinking, art, music, science, literature, architecture and history at different stages of man's development: past, present, and future. Length of course: one semester."
   c. I Know What I Like: "This is a study of that elusive quality called

'Taste.' What rules for behavior and appreciation has man organized to make his societies go? What do we mean by 'Culture?' Can a man live successfully while disobeying these rules? Since Art mirrors Life, how do man's art forms--Painting, Literature, Music--demonstrate the things he finds good? Ranging through the opinions expressed in the Bible, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, Purcell, Chesterfield, Cardinal Newman, the Victorians, Oscar Wilde, and the moderns, we will try to find some consistent thread that tells us what is good and right. Reading, listening, much discussion will be involved. Practice papers will be required. Nine weeks (first semester only)."

d. English Literature: "Since, in one semester, a survey course is not possible, the course has for its main goal the study of some of the outstanding English authors (Shakespeare, Swift, Hardy), the Romantic poets (Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, Byron), the Victorian poets, some modern poets, and novelists. A brief time is spent on British short story writers and essayists."

Swift would have loved that modest proposal.

Closely related to both The Ego Trip and The Civilized Sweep is a category which might be called The Potpourri, The Omnibus, or The Mixed Bag. Finding each of that triad equally deserving, I was unable to choose among them; therefore, I decided upon a more vulgar appellation, The Kitchen Sink, into which one can cast belletristic touchstones, current fashions, idiosyncratic fancies, and multi-media.

a. Art-English-Music Seminar--1 year: "Art-English-Music Seminar is designed to help students to feel and understand the reality of the arts as relevant to their existence and as exciting and profound statements of man's highest aspirations. Periodically, specialists in the various arts are invited to discuss and demonstrate their art, and tours are arranged to visit. . .artists and performing groups. As in regular English 12, attention is given to the history and development of the English language, including historical semantics, and to the elements of style in composition."

b. Contemporary Literature: "The content of this course includes a consideration of literary forms such as Westerns, mysteries, and science fiction as well as an exploration of the American's search for identity and his quest for social justice."

c. Modern Literature (Phase 2; Spring Semester): "The upheaval of today's world is reflected in current literature. What insight can be gained by the study of such authors as John Knowles, J.D. Salinger, Harper Lee, Albee, Camus, Anouilh, Beckett, Brecht, and Koestler?"

d. Linguistics: "Linguistics is designed to increase the student's awareness of the psychological and social functions of our language as reflected in literature. Students will therefore read selected portions of major works (dramas, novels, the BIBLE, full length essays and poems. Semantics, dialectology, and usage are stressed so that the student may gain a greater understanding of how the society influences our language. This course offers much opportunity for group work and independent study."

Perhaps I have been unfair long enough. However, I relinquish most reluctantly my category It Pays Not to Advertise, in which I list a course titled Logic, the description of which contains two fallacious statements, and a course titled Senior Composition, the description of which opens with four fragments. Too, I still have in my repertoire a category called Hanging Out One's Biases, under which I include a course in non-fiction which features the BIBLE and a course in Negro literature, the first major objective of which is "To teach students literary structure--points

of view, imagery, figures of speech, language, narrative method, and other components of the traditional study of literature--through the study of literature by Negroes." I cannot leave my facetious impositon of order on chaos, however, without sharing in full at least two offerings which appealed to me but which were intended for students in junior high school. The courses fall under a category I have termed The Hard Sell:

a. Sports: "The thump of a football, the flashing of ice skates, the crack of a baseball on a bat; all this and more. Explore the world of sports through books, magazines, television, and film. Your activities will include sportscasting, writing reviews and editorials, interviewing sports figures, sports cartooning, and discussions of current sports events. Put yourself in the place of Bobby Orr or Joe Namath in this exciting fast-paced course."

b. Mysteries: "Who dunnit? Was it the butler, the maid, or the 'Redhead'? In this action-packed course you will meet the greatest spell-binders of the mystery world. Chills will run up and down your spine as you figure out from the 'clue' who is the murderer. Plan your own 'perfect crime.' The flash of a knife in the alley, a scream in the dark, the ghostly shadow flitting away from the scene of the crime. Pick this course, if you think you can stand the excitement."

To those who would remind me that the map is not the territory and that course descriptions have at best only a slight resemblance to that which transpires in the classroom, I readily concede the point--if my imagined interlocutors concede to me that counselors, students, parents, teachers and administrators who have not experienced the territories being offered for exploration have only the maps to guide them in understanding the choices available. And while one of the indisputable strengths of multiple-elective programs is that they do provide choices for students, one must remember that all choices may be, from the point of view of the choice-maker, equally bad. To insist that unworthy courses will not survive because students will not elect them may be a specious assertion, one readily recognized by students who have heard, "Eat your spinach or go to bed; take your choice."

Further, as Alvin Toffler reminds us in FUTURE SHOCK, we are presently being overwhelmed by choices, most of them trivial. To avoid trivializing English and intellectually benumbing students already avalanched by choices will require us to assert some priorities about our subject, priorities formulated in the light of the students whom we teach, the troubled society which will be theirs to govern after we have passed, and the tormented world, convulsed by change and subject to continual tragedy, in which that society exists. While I am willing to give students their heads in some matters, I am not willing for them to determine unilaterally what it is they need to know. I can recall too many courses which I would have avoided had I been given the chance, but which, in retrospect I have come to value highly despite the compulsion under which they were taken.

On this matter, Sidney Hook writes in "John Dewey and His Betrayers" (CHANGE, November 1971), "Students demand the right to select their own courses on every level and with a kind of democratic belligerence inquire: 'Who are you to tell me, a grown person of 16 or 18 years of age, what my educational needs are? How can you prate about democracy in education? After all, I am neither an infant nor an idiot!' To which I believe we can reasonably answer:

> We are qualified, professional educators who have been studying the educational needs of our students and our culture for many years. We gladly indicate what we believe your educational needs are and are prepared to set forth the grounds on which we select them, inviting your critical response. For example,

we believe that you and your fellow students have a need to communicate clearly and effectively, to acquire a command of your own language, oral and written, no matter what your subsequent educational experience or career will be. You have that need whether you are presently aware of it or not. We believe you have a need to understand the essentials concerning the nature of your own bodies and mind, for what you don't know about these matters--as the current drug culture indicates--may hurt you, even kill you. Again, we believe that you have a need to understand something of the history of your own society, the political and economic forces shaping its future--all the more so because you have already indicated that you are aflame with reformist and revolutionary zeal to alter society.

. . .These needs you have in common with all other students, and the courses we require are those designed to meet them. We welcome your suggestions. Of course, you have other educational needs that are not common but personal and reflect your own special aptitudes, interests and aspirations. Here we are prepared to guide you, and help you fashion your own educational purposes and curriculum. Gradually you must take complete responsibility for your own education. When you do, your decisions are more likely to be sensible if they are informed."

Although I think I would find Sidney Hook's comments too conservative for my taste on most educational issues, here I agree with him, a sure sign I presume that my post-30 gray hairs--liberally sprinkled with skin--are on public display. But then, I already said that I am not to be trusted.

Even in elective programs that look sound on paper, students may turn courses into aimless excursions because of teachers' failures to assert professional responsibility. The difference between a leader who is judiciously permissive and one who is laissez-faire is the classroom difference between necessary control and irredeemable chaos. About the false equation often made between democratic participation in the classroom and the amount of student-initiated talk, George Hillocks, Jr., writes in AN EVALUATION OF PROJECT APEX. . . ,

> With a limited number of English class sessions during a given year, one is forced to question the wisdom of devoting whole class periods to what might uncharitably be called random opinion giving. Some of the Trenton classes with high percentages of student initiated response seemed to be just that kind. . . .In a class with over 70% student initiated talk, the discussion moved from statements of indignation over a parent who had made judgments about a book without reading it, to marijuana, sex, parent and adult inhibitions, students who smoke pot, adult biases, etc. The students moved at will from one topic to another with no apparent direction and without pulling all the topics together in any way.

Mr. Hillocks is not faulting, nor am I, genuine intellectual and emotional engagement of students in the subject matter of a course, engagement, incidentally, which Mr. Hillocks found far more often in the APEX program than in the traditional programs used as controls in his evaluative study. Whether found in multiple-elective or traditional programs, such engagement results in discussions which, rather than cursorily and mindlessly skipping across the surface of human problems and behavior, burrow to find their sources. Discussions that try to locate root causes are not rap sessions: they are carefully conceived and, whether led by students or by teachers, they are directed, not to predetermined ends or responses, but rather to predetermined depths. Because they are penetrating explorations into territory wherein await no right answers, only seemingly-endless complex and multiple possibilities, discussions worthy of that name leave participants exhausted, requiring as they do the almost constant interplay of hearts and heads, intuitions

and intellects, in the demanding act of collective problem solving.

In summary, I find that present multiple-elective programs generally lack philosophical rationales which can provide justification and cohesion for courses being offered. Whatever rationales are developed must be ones broad enough to encompass the growing edges of the study of language as it is used both prosaically and artistically in spoken, written, and pictorial forms, and specific enough to differentiate the intellectual and emotional need of youngsters who come to the schools from dramatically different backgrounds and who, upon the completion of their formal schooling, will contribute to the society in quite different ways. The black youngsters in Detroit, the Chicanos in Phoenix, the Orientals in San Francisco, the Puerto Ricans in New York, and the Wasps in Beverly Hills will need to know some things in common about English if, as members of the society, they are to remain in communication. However, they will also need to learn some things about English which are not shared with other groups and which are meant to help ensure the preservation of a culturally pluralistic society. Finally, each student will need to know some things about English which are offered to satisfy his singularity--the interests, deficiencies, abilities, and ambitions which, in combination, mark him as unique among others.

Despite my lamentations about their want of rationales and about the silliness I find in present multiple-elective programs, silliness that includes both preciously narrow and pretentiously global courses being offered by teachers insensitive to their subject and their students, I nonetheless believe the movement has great potential, not merely because students and teachers favor it, but because if it is soundly pluralistic in its philosophy and implementation, it can help destroy malignant forces now at work on the curriculum--forces that would have us believe that all goals of education can be stated and evaluated in narrowly behavioristic ways, forces that would impose upon education, through national and state-wide assessment programs, a monolithic curriculum incapable of intelligent and dynamic adaptation to diversity among students and to rapidity of change, both in our discipline and in our times.

Multiple-elective programs leave doors open at a time when closed systems threaten. By providing opportunities for ad hoc courses addressed to emerging human problems and concerns, they defy assessments which rely principally on standardized tests, instruments which are perforce reactionary, able only to evaluate students' performance in relationship to knowledge and skills long-established, incapable of assessing their familiarity with the new or their foresight into the unknown. Too, by offering students opportunities to participate in continuing decisions about the content and aims of the curriculum, multiple-elective programs can discourage teachers from writing sterile behavioral objectives, objectives predestined to be worthless if, ignoring the process of learning, they are frozen into final form before students even enter class. Finally, by being attentive to the rightful demands of ethnic minorities for courses relevant to their lives, values, and traditions, multiple elective programs can provide the diversity of offerings in English necessary to help foster and maintain a rich cultural pluralism in our nation.

With those last comments, I slide slowly onto the seat of the bandwagon, feel discomfitted by the splinters and by the cacophony and brassiness of the band, but on the whole, feel reasonably comfortable about where we seem to be heading.

A CUSTOM-DESIGNED ENGLISH PROGRAM

Don Ragsdale, Principal, Midvale Junior High School, Midvale, Utah
Elved Wright, English Department Chairman, Midvale Junior High School
Patricia Edwards, Junior High English Coordinator, Jordan School District

The experiences students encounter in their English classes have been indicted of driving more of them out of school than any other one factor in their school lives. English educators the country over have been aware of this problem and deeply concerned about the implications of the situation. They have examined, innovated, evaluated and revised one program after another with the result that English as a subject has been in a state of turmoil for the past ten years. English teachers who examined professional literature became concerned and uncertain about the programs they were teaching.

As a result of the problems arising in English education, and in an attempt to find some answers to the questions teachers, students, and the general public were asking, authorities in English education from all English speaking nations met in a seminar at Dartmouth College late in August and early in September of 1966. The results of this meeting have been far reaching and have done much to improve English education. One example of the kinds of changes which have taken place is the revision of the English curriculum at Midvale Junior High School in Midvale, Utah.

After reading and discussing the two publications which summarized the results of the Dartmouth conference, USES OF ENGLISH and GROWTH THROUGH ENGLISH, the English teachers at Midvale Junior High School felt that the communication skills offerings were inadequate, too limited, and too rigid, and were not meeting students' needs nor utilizing teachers' talents and interests to the best advantage. To find a solution to these problems, the Jordan School District sponsored an in-service class in the spring of 1970 which involved all of the teachers working in the English department, along with other members of the faculty. The curriculum we are now using and our teacher assignments are the results of this study.

Teachers and students were asked to suggest classes they would like to have offered in the English curriculum. These suggestions were compiled, refined, arranged in semester blocks, and registration forms were prepared listing these offerings. After preliminary registration, those classes with fewer than ten students were deleted. The students involved were then given opportunities to make other choices. The following program was offered for the 1971-1972 school year:

COMMUNICATIVE ARTS REGISTRATION 1971

Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade	Ninth Grade
All students must register for Basic Study Skills and Composition first semester. You may then select one of the other classes.	All students must register for Grammar I You may then select one of the other classes.	Semester Classes (Register for two or more)
Basic Study Skills and Composition	Grammar I	Humanities I
Grammar I	Media I	Humanities II
Drama--Mythology	Media II	Expository Writing
	Independent Reading and Speech	Creative Writing

Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade	Ninth Grade
Story Telling--The Novel	Speech and Drama	Vocational English
Mythology--The Novel	Creative Writing	Modern Drama--Short Story
Drama--The Novel		Shakespeare--The Novel
Independent Reading--Story Telling		History of English--Independent Reading
		History of English--Media I
		Short Story--Media II
		Speech and Production (Full Year)

After the registration procedure was completed and the classes to be offered were determined, the English faculty met and individual teachers indicated the classes they would prefer to teach. Assignments were made on this basis. Teachers used the balance of the time in the in-service class to plan and prepare for the classes they would teach, and shared ideas and materials. Consultants from the district, state office, and the local universities shared their expertise with the group. At the end of the workshop each teacher in the school presented an overview of the classes he would teach, and each department chairman related the specific classes to the overall objectives of the department. As a result, each teacher had some knowledge of the scope, content, sequence, objectives, and procedures of the classes taught by other teachers.

Students were required to register for a minimum of four quarters in communicative areas. To insure that students had a common background in the skills, two quarters of basic communication skills were required in the seventh grade. These classes stressed speaking skills, orientation to the new school, study skills, reference skills, spelling, composition, usage, and mechanics. Seventh grade students could elect other classes to complete their year's program. In the eighth grade, two quarters of grammar and composition were required. These classes emphasized the study of grammar as a description of the way the language operates and as a tool to be used in improving the accuracy and effectiveness of spoken and written communication. Other classes could be elected. Ninth grade students could choose any combination of classes to fill their program.

The English department offered more choices than had ever before been available. Students registered for several different classes. By making choices available to the students, and accepting the choices they made, the English department found that students became more involved. The decisions for determining courses of study and the responsibility for achievement in the classes shifted from the teacher to the student. Students elected to take classes in media, drama, the short story, the novel, history of the English language, creative writing and many others. English became interesting, different and exciting. Even the required classes seemed palatable.

Near the end of the 1971-1972 school year, students and teachers were asked to evaluate the program and to decide whether to continue the same type program for another year. Some trouble spots were identified but the choice was overwhelmingly

in favor of continuance of the program. Both students and teachers felt that it had been the most satisfying and productive experience they had known in their English classes.

To overcome some of the problems encountered in registration and to incorporate suggestions made by students, parents, and teachers, the program was modified slightly for the 1972-1973 school year. A one quarter study of drama and another quarter in which the short story would be studied were made requirements for ninth grade. The mechanics of computer registration were then keyed to the required classes which were indicated as "English" with the options being listed specifically. Students registered for their choices and were automatically placed in the corresponding required course. The following courses are being offered for the 1972-1973 school year:

Seventh Grade

Select one of the following: (All students are required to complete one sem. of reading while in junior high)

English--Reading

English--Story-Telling and Drama

English--Novel and Mythology

English--Independent Reading and Composition

Eighth Grade

Select one of the following: (All students are required to complete one sem. of reading while in junior high)

English--Reading

English--Independent Reading and Speech

English--Poetry and Media

English--Drama and Creative Writing

Ninth Grade

Select one of the following: (All students are required to complete one sem. of reading while in junior high)

English--Reading

English--Humanities

English--Media

English--Speed Readir

English--Speech

English--Poetry and Creative Writing

English--Independent Reading and History of English

English--Vocational English and Novel

English--Non-fiction

Speech and Production

Students and teachers have made their choices. Courses have been planned and materials are being procured as needs indicate. Computer registration has been completed without serious complications and the English department at Midvale Junior High School is anticipating another successful and gratifying school year.

WHY NOT TRY THEMATIC UNIT PLANNING?

John H. Bushman, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas
and
Sandra Jones and Sandra Zerger, Students, University of Kansas

While preparing the undergraduate language arts methods course at the University of Kansas, the age-old question of relevancy kept creeping into my thoughts--relevancy not only from the point of view of student teacher needs, but also relevancy from the point of view of curriculum innovation. The question persisted: How could I meet the needs of future teachers of English who would soon find themselves in a variety of teaching situations? Some would be involved in curriculum innovation in that they would be asked to prepare various English electives--mini-courses, if you will--so that the curriculum could meet the needs of many students; other student teachers, perhaps not so fortunate, might very well be faced with the traditional, more highly structured high school English curriculum; i.e., teaching yearly courses of freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior English. How then might a methods course be handled so that both ends of this spectrum would be satisfied? The remainder of this paper, therefore, is a description of one way to teach the language arts in the secondary school. In addition to being food for thought for teacher education programs, this material is intended as well for experienced teachers of English.

The basis for this approach to the teaching of the language arts or English or the humanities or even "media ecology" as Neil Postman suggests, is twofold: 1) process rather than product centered, and 2) thematic unit planning.

The process-oriented program is vital for today's youth. As Dr. Geraldine LaRocque so aptly states in the September 1971 issue of the ENGLISH JOURNAL: "Today it is more important than ever that a teacher be a spark plug, not a fuel pipe. It is imperative that we teach youngsters 'how to learn,' and knowing how to learn is knowing the 'process of learning ('English Curriculum: Process or Product?" ENGLISH JOURNAL,September 1971, 781-786). " The approach suggested in this paper utilizes this very point. Students are able to spend their time more wisely discovering what is important to them as they explore investigatory topics that comprise the thematic units. Students are studying in a curriculum which is based, as Albert Marckwardt suggests, on experience, involvement, and response ("Dartmouth and After: Issues in English Language Teaching," NEW ENGLISH; NEW IMPERATIVES, ed. Henry B. Maloney, p.19). Students are experiencing a new approach, a stimulating and rewarding process of discovery; they are involved in relevant quests, seeking and learning answers not to predetermined teacher questions, but to their own queries; and certainly they are responding, hopefully among students in classroom interaction, but perhaps just to themselves as they begin to synthesize the material that they have gathered.

The thematic units of this program offer the structure and content to the curriculum. The units may be linguistically or socially oriented; their length will vary depending on the subject matter and school calendar. The process of determining the content of each unit is best accomplished by a joint effort of teachers and students. Certainly, in this way, individual differences for students in each class are taken into consideration when decisions occur after the enrollment has been completed. Of course, some pre-planning of curriculum will have taken place by teachers within the department. The organization and structure are limited only to the imagination and resources of students and teachers.

These thematic units are important in that they provide a means for the experience, involvement, and response mentioned earlier in this paper. Students spend their time questioning, probing about material that is important to them now.

That is not to say, however, that literature of the past is not appropriate for study. Quite the contrary, there are many units in which this material can be effectively used. The important point is that any unit is not limited to any specific literary period, genre, style etc., but material from all these areas are utilized under one unifying theme. In addition, all the language arts are included. Teachers incorporate the skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening into each unit. Thus, whatever the unit happens to be, literature, compositions, speeches, and other oral work are organized around this particular theme. Teachers and students can also make effective use of other resources such as film, recordings, drama, music, newspapers, and magazines.

While discussing this approach with my student teachers, one student observed: "I don't see the place for formal grammar teaching. How do I incorporate a unit on grammar?" My response was simply: "You don't!" I continued, after that blunt remark, by explaining that grammar in the secondary school should be included only if there is a breakdown in the student's communication processes, and in this case, only if the teacher truly believes that what he is about to teach will effect change in the student's ability to communicate. Primarily, this teaching will occur on a one-to-one basis or in small groups. At this time, the best of all grammars should be used. It is important to note, however, that the study of the grammar of English, or related topics, might very well be included as one of the thematic units. If it is, the reason for its inclusion should be to offer interested students a description of the language that they speak rather than to suggest a claim that it will increase the student's ability to speak and write more effectively.

How can this approach be of some use to the secondary school teacher of English? The answer seems obvious. If a teacher is in a traditional situation, thematic units may be used throughout the school year; if, however, the teacher is in a more innovative program and there is a need for English electives, the teacher simply uses each unit as a course in itself. Thus, it is my opinion that the unit approach offers a means by which the teacher can more easily meet the individual needs of his students no matter what the teaching situation.

During the fall semester, 1971, my students wrote six-week thematic plans as class projects. Many were excellent. For the remaining portion of this paper, I have included two such plans written by the co-authors of this article. Since space does not allow for the complete description of each of the six-week units, summaries, brief outlines, and abbreviated lists are included for each unit.

Revolution and the Establishment

Aims:

To confront students with the power of language.

To investigate the reasons why there are conflicts between a revolutionary movement and an establishment.

To explore the influences that perpetuate these conflicts.

Rationale:

The theme Revolution and the Establishment elicits many discussion topics: the Classic youth vs. the older generation, the oppressed vs. the oppressive institutions, progress vs. tradition and the new vs. the old morality. In this unit students develop ideas from these and other similar topics. This six-weeks period is devoted mostly to the study of the power of words and the effectiveness of language. Even though the emphasis is on language and composition, it is important to note that elements of speech, journalism, literature, and criticism are crucial to the learning process and are a part of this unit plan. My emphasis is to foster an awareness of style--the artistic use of language to manipulate responses to various stimuli. It is important for students to see what important

influence rhetoric has on revolutions and establishments. For example, students would certainly note that propaganda is the lifeblood of most revolutionary movements as well as the defense of the establishments and that prejudices can very well cause such conflicts. Students should begin to develop their own style and an awareness that they, too, can effect change in themselves and in others through the power of language. Students should feel that they are potential artists comparable to many of the greats--Hemingway, Eliot, O'Neill--and that many of the responses that they make are no less effective than what has been written by other writers.

Evaluation of this unit, of the students, and of the instructor comes from the class as a whole. Open, informal criticism is mandatory if this unit plan is to be successful. As often as conveniently possible, compositions and speeches are graded by a student-teacher conference. In addition, a great deal of interaction among the students is encouraged. The more 'learning noise' in the classroom, the more successful this unit. The subject matter to be explored, questions to be answered, and specific topics to be discussed come from the students. The emphasis is process rather than product oriented.

Week 1 Introduction of theme.

Aim:

To break down discussion inhibitions.

To explore interest areas within the general theme.

Activities:

Improvisation--each student brings and shares a success symbol indicating what it means to him.

Questions concerning the meaning of "revolution" and "establishment." Writing first impressions to these words, perhaps using stream of consciousness technique.

Discussion of handouts which include popular songs, passages from famous speeches (e.g. presidential speech vs. one by a young radical leader), news stories, and headlines.

Determining sources, meanings, speakers, audiences of selected passages.

Defining terms such as literature, composition, grammar, and usage and noting their importance to this class and to this theme.

Illustrating differences between grammar and usage from magazine ads, news headlines, recorded examples of saying the same thing in different ways (I went, I split), popular song lyrics (I've Got To Be Me," "Sunshine").

General discussion on rhetoric and its influence on revolutions and establishments.

Week 2 The Power of Language

Aim:

To note and understand language devices and language varieties; to be cognizant of their utilization in the revolution and establishment theme.

Activities:

Investigation of the use of propaganda in newspapers, magazines, and television, with some attention to the fact that propaganda may be positive as well as negative.

Discuss the meaning and uses of connotation and denotation.

Discuss dialect differences in English spoken in America.

Improvisations to illustrate language devices and varieties (student to student; student to parent in public, at home; student to teacher; draft evader to his parents; a longhaired boy in jeans to principal of school; a 19 year old unmarried girl at college sharing apartment with unmarried man to her parents; student to student from different parts of country).

Individual research projects investigating various dialect differences found within the school and the community.

Define "slang," "jargon," "camp" and relate it to the theme.

Observe film "A" (Contemporary films, McGraw Hill).

Oral and written response to film illustrating understanding of power of language.

Observe film "A Time for Burning." Discuss it indicating elements of propaganda, prejudice, subjectivity, and objectivity. Questions to consider: Is the film biased? How have usage and rhetoric been effective, or have they? What are the elements of propaganda? How are they used? To what effect? Who is revolting? What or who represents the establishment?

Week 3 Writing Ideas

Aim:

To encourage students to write freely by responding to selected stimuli.

Activities:

Free writing after listening to various kinds of music--popular, band, classical. Discuss different moods set by different music. What effect does this have on the writer?

Sharing compositions with class.

Free writing after viewing visual media--slides, pictures, films.

Small group work discussing and evaluating each others' writing. Emphasis is given to positive responses to compositions.

Rewriting, if students desire, hopefully incorporating some of the suggestions made in small groups. Students should realize that they are writing for a variety of audiences and not just the teacher.

Week 4 Literature and Writing

Aim:

To explore literature seeking a variety of literary forms which suggest the theme "Revolution and Establishment?"

Activities:

Individual conferences with each student discussing compositions which have been written in previous week. Other students read freely choosing selections which suggest a "revolution and establishment" theme (a good source to begin--G. Robert Carlsen's BOOKS AND THE TEENAGE READER, Bantam, 1967.)

Writing responses to selections read or skimmed. Some questions to think about: What are some of the thematic conflicts involved? How do they relate to various areas already discussed? If the book deals with the past, how can you relate it to the present? to yourself?

Sharing responses with class.

Week 5 One Step Further...

Aim:

To provide opportunity for students to work in small groups.

Activities:

Narrowing the number of sources that were reviewed during the previous week. The reading list is narrowed to six selections for the class to study. Students sign up in groups of five to work on one of the six books. They read it and meet in groups to discuss it. Each group develops a presentation to give to the class. The students center their presentations generally around the revolution-establishment conflict that is found in the selection. Some suggested activities: panel discussion, improvisations, demonstrations, dramatic presentation, etc.

The following books make up a possible list for such an activity:

THE SNOW GOOSE, Paul Gallico	A SEPARATE PEACE, John Knowles
THE CHILD BUYER, John Hershey	ANIMAL FARM, George Orwell
THE UGLY AMERICAN, William J. Lederer	CATCHER IN THE RYE, J.D. Salinger
TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD, Harper Lee	FRANNY AND ZOOEY, J.D. Salinger
ON THE BEACH, Nevil Shute	NATIVE SON, Richard Wright

Week 6 Presenting...

Aim:

To provide an opportunity for students to share orally what they have prepared in groups.

Activities:

Presentations are given at the rate of two a day. Each is followed by an informal discussion.

Other class members may want to take part in the presentations. The group presenting should be assured that only its part will be graded.

Response, requested or spontaneous, is very important. Everyone will have more fun and when it is over, the whole class will have become a part of an exciting learning experience.

Black-American Expression

Aims:

To confront some of the public and personal means of expression of Black-American writers.

To better understand the human realities of Black America as seen primarily through literature.

Rationale:

This unit may take different directions each six weeks depending upon the students and the teacher. For this description, the unit is divided into two major areas: 1) personal expression--(auto) biography and blues, and 2) public expression--poetry and spirituals.

For the Black students in the class such a unit offers models which provide them with a sense of moral values which seem significant for them. Also, they will have a sense of pride in their Blackness and in their being a part of a rich heritage in the American experience. The other students in the class will realize that "American" literature includes more than works by White Americans, who have melted into the common melting pot in America.

All students should be encouraged to ask questions. Their questions may include, but not be limited to, some of the following: Is the melting pot theory valid? Is multi-culturalism a valid alternative? How have Black men had to struggle to attain a degree of respect and achievement, how have they arrived at self-awareness, and how do their experiences relate to all readers? What survival techniques have Black men been forced to utilize? More specifically, students should be asking what impulses lead Black men (and all men) to write autobiographies, blues, spirituals, poetry? Hopefully, this unit will enable the students to answer some of these questions.

Because the method of teaching is as important, if not more so, than the content; and because so many good content aids (anthologies, bibliographies) are available to the teacher, this six-week unit emphasizes only a few of the many possible activities.

The section on personal expression should be more individualized than that on public expression; therefore, that section is handled by dividing the class into groups. Each student reads a book selected from a list; discussion groups are formed accordingly. For purposes of this paper, three groups are formed: THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X, Malcolm X with Alex Haley; BLACK BOY, Richard

Wright; and AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A FUGITIVE NEGRO, Samuel Ward.

Week 1

Aim:

To break down discussion inhibitions.
To explore the general theme of the unit.

Activities:

Discussion of why men write autobiographies.
Read together LeRoi Jones's "Myth of Negro Literature"
What reasons does Jones give for Black men's writing?
What Black men do to re-create a tradition?
Follow up with Langston Hughes's "Negro Artist and the Radical Mountain"
Begin students' own autobiographies (may be in the form of a journal.)
Select groups and begin reading books.

Week 2 and 3 Book Groups

Group A

Aims:

To see how autobiographies help one to understand the lives of the authors as well as to help the writer and the reader expand their knowledge of their own past.
Some possible materials:
MALCOLM X SPEAKS, Grove press (book); Public Information Communication Association (record).
THE ASSASSINATION OF MALCOLM X, George Breitman and Herman Porter
"Harlem," Langston Hughes.

Activities:

Discussion
Role Playing of various situations found in the book (e.g. KKK visiting the Little residence, or Malcom's "learning his place" from his English teacher Mr. Ostrowski)
Listening to records
Writing personal responses to the book.
Writing "news releases" of Malcolm's death from various viewpoints such as from that of a hardhat, a white liberal, a Black militant.
Impromptu speeches of a Black Muslim (integrationalist, red-neck) running for mayor

Group B BLACK BOY

Aim:

To help students understand autobiography as a means of self-expression and psychological survival

Activities:

Write sensory catalogues in order to understand the thrill with words Wright speaks of and to understand the catalogues he includes. Go outside of the classroom for visual catalogues; listen to records, recordings for sounds.
Role playing and improvisation, especially good for understanding his grandmother, his aunt, and his reactions to these people.

Group C AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A FUGITIVE NEGRO

Aims:

To see an autobiography as confessional, a means of purging oneself of bad experiences, and to see the effects of de-culturalization of slavery.

Activities:

Establishing a miniature plantation with the students assuming the roles of masters and slaves. The masters do not permit use of English in the classroom, rather a new pig-Latin is required.
After the experiment, have the students write and speak about their feeling toward the experience in order to purge themselves of it.
Discussion questions concerning the book

Entire Class:

General discussion and sharing of experiences concerning the last two weeks' work. Such discussions are an opportunity to relate each autobiography experience to the theme of Black-American expression.

Week 4 The Blues

Aim:

To confront the blues as personal expressions

Activities:

Listening to records, such as Bessie Smith, and Ike and Tina Turner
Reading the Blues woes of Jessie B. Simple, by Langston Hughes
Reading Hughes's "Weary Blues" and Jazzonia"
Have students collect blues from people in the community

Week 5 and 6 Spirituals and Poems

Aims:

To demonstrate how these means of Black-American expression establish a sense of community.
To introduce the students to the form of the expression.

Materials:

Spirituals:

Johnson, James W. THE BOOK OF AMERICAN NEGRO SPIRITUALS
Jones, LeRoi, BLACK MUSIC
Work, John ed. AMERICAN NEGRO SONGS AND SPIRITUALS

Poetry Collections:

Brown, Sterling; Arthur P. Davis, and Usysses, Lee, eds., THE NEGRO CARAVAN.
Chapman, Abrahams, ed. BLACK VOICES
Gross, Theodore, and James A. Emanuel, eds., DARK SYMPHONY
Hill, Herbert, ed., SOON, ONE MORNING
Jones, LeRoi, and Larry Neal, eds. BLACK FIRE
Lock, Alain, ed. THE NEW NEGRO

Records:

THE POETRY OF MAYA ANGELOU (GWP Records), THE LAST POETS, (Pip Records)

Poems:

Dunbar, Paul L. "We Wear the Mask"	Bontemps, Arna. "My Heart Has Known Its Winter"
DuBois, W.E.B. "A Literary Atlanta"	Hughes, Langston. "Dream Boogie"
McKay, Claude. "If We Must Die"	Brooks, Gwendolyn. "We Real Cool"
Cullen, Countee. "Incident"	Jones, LeRoi. "The Invention of Comics"

Activities:

Oral reading, choral readings, including responsive readings for spirituals
Group creation of own spirituals
Improvisations
Writing and reading personal responses to poems
Listening to records
Discussion through questioning: Some of the questions which follow will provide a limited amount of discussion which can occur on this section. Of course, students will provide others.
What sense of duality and rejection is expressed by Dubois (the veil), Dunbar (the mask), and Jones (the sleepwalker)?
To what extent are the spirituals and poems expressions of social protest and of the self?
How do the poems and spirituals suggest a means of personal and group survival?
To what extent do the spirituals and poems prove significant psychologically?
How do the works we have studied express the authors' definitions of "humanity?"
What impact do the spirituals and poems have in creating a sense of unity? How is this accomplished?
What elements do you think are expressed as the core of consciousness in the

poems included in this unit?

Certainly, these two thematic units exemplify the kinds of material that can be meaningful in an English curriculum whether it be a traditional or innovative program. Too, these units, and other similar ones, emphasize content and methods that English teachers want in their classrooms--process orientation; creativity; student freedom; student exploration, involvement, and response; new rich experiences; student-centeredness; and response-oriented curriculum. Thus, thematic unit planning does meet the needs of today's English curriculum.

AS THE WORLD TURNS ON

Charles Weingartner, University of South Florida, Tampa
(Speech originally given at the Third Annual Conference on Teaching English in the Southwest, Tempe, January 1970.)

This morning at a few minutes after seven while I was watching Johnny Lightning and trying to have breakfast with an old friend of mine, his two children--three and five--were at the table with us and their attention was clearly devoted to the television set. At one point he half wistfully, half whimsically, said to his children--after he had turned down the sound on the TV, "Wouldn't you rather have breakfast with Daddy and Uncle Charlie and talk to us than watch television?" and they quickly and loudly said, "No!" and scurried over to the TV set and turned the volume back up.

Part of what I need to try to do today is to tie together some pieces of the various revolutions we are all trying to work our way through. One of the difficulties of being caught in the midst of a revolution, much less seven or eight or nine or ten or however many we're experiencing currently, is that you have no perspective on it. The worst person to tell you what's happening in any kind of a revolution is the person right in the middle of it, because there's no way to get a handle on anything that's happening. I want to try to say something about the media of communication, and what they're doing as nearly as I can tell, and to describe the changes that are occurring generally in our society and in the world and what all this means for education.

The story about the kids and television this morning is more ominous than amusing if you think about it. Television is really the third parent and kids spend much more time with a TV set than they do with either of the natural, non-electronic parents, although maybe parents are becoming electronicized, too. One of my notions about TV is that it is middle class pot. You turn on the set and turn on yourself and go on a kind of a multi-colored LSD trip if you're one of the people that's gone into debt for a color set. All the while we're deploring what the kids are doing we're turning on in our own vegetable-like way. In any case, TV is the third parent and it has ominous implications, for education particularly. Kids, you know, spend between three and five thousand hours in front of a television set before they begin school. And a lot of stuff happens to them. All TV is essentially educational; while we don't think of it that way, we're being taught a lot of things while that stuff is being laid on us. By the time a student finishes high school, he's got somewhere between twenty and twenty-five thousand hours in front of a television set and not quite eleven thousand hours in all of his classes in all of his years in school.

And TV doesn't even take up most of the high school student's time. The most important medium for adolescents in our culture today is the LP record, rapidly switching over to the Cassette tape. Television has subsumed, and is being reinforced in this role by recordings, the roles of most of the older institutions in western culture, particularly the church. There are several books out at the moment describing how this process is occurring. The church used to be the source of values of perspective on the universe, the basis for determining the difference, which is barely perceptible anymore between right and wrong, the source of pagentry, unity, and all that kind of stuff. Now television fulfills that role. Our heroes, if we have any, are made available to us, and sometimes even manufactured for us if the book entitled THE SELLING OF THE PRESIDENT is any indication, manufactured to meet our tastes which we have derived from spending so much time watching TV and,

up until recently, films.

What I want to do is give a quick snapshot of the magnitude of the effect that media are having. All of the older institutions in western civilization are under dramatic attack, in one way or another. Most of us are simply annoyed by that fact. I have an old friend who's been a Jesuit for 30 years, but as of January 1 he's no longer a Jesuit. Part of the City University in which I work includes Hunter College, and the newly appointed President of Hunter College used to be a Nun. She's now the wife of a Jewish businessman. Change is occurring at a tremendously rapid rate, and most of our institutions are using up their energy to preserve a role that's increasingly anachronistic. Santayana got off a line one time about fanaticism which he said is a condition you suffer when you redouble your efforts after having forgotten your aims. This happens with increasing frequency in schools and it's called "enrichment" as nearly as I can tell. We find out that something didn't work so we spend twice as much time and effort on it. That kind of a posture is ominous for the institution that devotes its energies simply to doing twice as well something its forgotten the reasons for doing in the first place.

So this Conference would seem to me to be a small ecumenical council where we ask ourselves, "What are we doing here?" "What business are we in?" and "What role should the media play in this business?" since media are the single most dominant portion of our lives. We spend about a third of our lives, one way or another, full time, in the face of media, either listening to records or reading newspapers or watching television or film.

Let me give you some statistics just to help make dramatic the ubiquitousness of media and, I guess from the point of view of most of us, the pernicious effects they are having. It's incredible that the schools don't take cognizance of the fact that the media exist and are doing all these things. Schools by and large persist as if the most recent innovation in media of communication is the printed book, but it's curious that while print has been around for 400 years the largest single problem in the school is reading. When we lay on the need to develop literacy in the other media, I don't know how long we can persist in this old posture. Let me give you some numbers and then try to talk about what I think the changing role of education is in the face of all this, and what it has to do with media. In 1750 there were about 10 scientific journals in the world; today there are more than 7000 related to bio-medical sciences alone. In 1950--this is just print now--chemists were publishing 600 articles every two weeks. In 1965 (one of the problems is that print proliferation is so great that it is difficult to update figures), more than 7000 articles were published every two weeks. It's literally true now that print needs to be re-examined as a viable medium. We have to figure out what it can do. It's obviously an historical medium, but by the time you go through the process of getting something in print, it's no longer about anything. It's about something that somebody thinks happened at some point in the past. If Yale University were to continue using its present card catalog system, it would need eight acres of floor space in the next 30 years just to hold the catalog cards. What I'm getting at is there are certain systems that are now turning inside out, they not only don't work, they are ultimately self-destructive. The metaphor of the dinosaur keeps coming up. Dinosaurs were much larger and much more durable and around much longer on this small space ship we're all on, around much longer than man has been around so far, but no one has seen one recently. The problem was the environment changed and they didn't.

We're in about the same spot. The environment is changing and we aren't, and we need to (1) admit that we must change dramatically and (2) then figure out the

best ways in which to work toward change. It's a very uncongenial job. Most of us would simply rather deplore change and wish it would go away or stop or something. Probably, it won't. Relatively even more is expected to be published during the next half century. I don't know what we are going to do with it. I had a job a couple of years ago where the only thing I learned was complementary to this. I had done a statewide survey and had about 400,000 questionnaires each of which had 79 bits of information, and I needed to get some computer time, and, of course, there was no money in the budget. So wandering around in my usual role of the mendicant--who provides the contrast to other parts of the program--I was looking wistfully for computer time to get the information out in the usable form. In the course of this I was directed to a large data center because one of the people on the State Board of Education was president of this corporation, with all these computers. So he called and told them I would be arriving, and they should be nice to me and help me in what ever way they could. Not knowing who I was, only that the president of the corporation had called, they were very deferential--I don't think I've ever been treated like that any place else in my life. I was kind of an ominous, mysterious figure sent by the president--that was all they knew--so they showed me whatever I wanted to see.

The data center was housed in what at one time, about 20 years ago, had been a textile mill. They didn't add to it. On the outside it looked pretty much like a textile mill, but on the inside they'd gone down into the ground eleven stories. It was like a man-made mine, full of electronic data processing equipment which ran 24 hours a day, where they kept all their inventories and prepared all the payrolls for their international corporation business. It had kind of an ominous H. G. Wells-like theme. People pushing little carts on tracks just like in mines, but instead of taking stuff out, they were putting pages full of numbers in, storing them away in these caverns at the ends of the tracks. And it was over-whelming, people taking the temperatures of the machines--that's critical, because machines are like people, at least in that regard, with very narrow tolerances in temperature; they get sick and start giving you mis-information, just like we do, and one of my points is that media are making us sick and filling us with mis-information, rather than information. In any case, the men who were directing me on this tour spoke very affectionately of all these machines; they have numbers, I don't remember all the numbers, but they speak of the good old "716," a real sweetie. If you want some ideas for ominous contemporary dramatic literature, I guess you could call this Technological Gothic. We came to one machine which had been installed because there's apparently a law that has yet to be identified, like Parkinson's Law and the Peter Principle. It has to do with what happens as more sophisticated systems develop for closing the loop and providing faster feedback. Computers do this so the rate at which information is generated is increasing exponentially, and more information makes it possible to generate even more information even more rapidly. It's a literal explosion for which this particular machine was devised. (I really shouldn't use that word, machine; machines are extensions of man's physical powers, electronic data processing equipment are extensions of man's intellectual powers and that's really a very different order of business). Most of these devices we're used to produce a kind of old piano roll and they proceed at about that speed; it comes out the end of the machine and drops into a tin can and when that fills up workers load it into a cart and the filled-up carts are pushed off into the caverns. But the stuff came out of this one device so fast there was a hood on it to trap it. It literally shot out of the print-out device. An obvious question to ask is, "How the hell can you keep up with that?" because there were pages and pages of numbers all of which I guess meant something to someone.

At that point all the executives did their executive-anxiety thing. Then began an extemporaneous speech about the incompatibility between electronic data processing systems and human systems which meant that there wasn't any way to keep up with it. They had a team of guys busy pushing carts full of pages that came out of this machine into whatever available space there was because they could barely get back

in time to get the next can that was already full. Now this may sound facetious but I have enough vestige of romanticism in me to clutch at straws. What this meant to me was as the capability for increasingly dealing with high speed preparation and storage of information increased, the accessibility to that information decreased. And I could see this whole system becoming self-canceling. It was producing so much information so rapidly no one knew how to keep up with it. They didn't know where the stuff went; they didn't have a system for cataloging it or keeping track of it. Maybe by now it's reached that point, I hope so. It would make me feel a little bit better, not much, but a little, knowing that all those things are running 24 hours a day, printing out all that stuff, and there's so much of it nobody knows where it is or how to get at it, much less what it might mean. In any case, the proliferation of stuff, even on paper, is so prodigious it raises serious questions about what we should be doing in the schools. The posture we're maintaining at the moment of ignoring it, pretending it isn't happening, is simply not going to work. It's not adequate. Mary Shelley's perceptiveness in inventing the Dr. Frankenstein monster metaphor is one of the portions of literature to which we might legitimately direct our attention.

At present colleges and universities double their library collections about every fifteen years. Collections which now run to 2 million volumes and beyond in a large university are common. Our knowledge--stuff we think we know--is estimated to be doubling about every decade. We're adding 65,000 words every minute to the printed record, 330 volumes every day. How do you keep up with it? How do you know what's out there to keep up with?

It means that if one re-enters a technological field or a scientific profession after a very brief absence everything he knows is more a liability than an asset, and the best thing he can do is to unlearn it. That may be one of the educational tasks ahead of us. It may be necessary in a rapidly changing environment where information and knowledge change so rapidly that we need to be taught in school how to unlearn dead ideas and useless information. One of the problems is that our precedents in school were set at the time, until just recently, when we lived in a relatively stable environment. The pattern of staring wistfully into the past as the basic mode of education works when you are in a stable environment, the point being that the group got to be wherever it happens to be by learning strategies for survival over the years. But that works only when yesterday is pretty much like today and tomorrow will be pretty much like today. When the past and future are all about the same, then the past is useful. But today has almost nothing to do with yesterday and one of the few things we know about tomorrow is that it is going to have almost nothing to do with today. The task of spending our energies and efforts, memorizing random bits of the past--and that's mostly what we do in school--now seems curious. We make up taxonomies about the past and then we memorize them and if we tell back a little bit more than half of that we pass, and if we pass enough of those "adventures" we become immune to them. Someone says, "You will have to take another three credits of this," and we say, "No, we've had that," by which we proclaim our immunity. Then we go on and inflict our version of the past on someone else.

I guess one of the functions of spending our time looking into the past is it keeps us from thinking about the distresses and anxieties of the present and the future. That gives me a handle for making one of my basic points. Changes in the environment have required a 180 degree turn that we have yet to make in schools. Education still consists mostly of looking into the past for some romantic vision of a better time and place. That is the worst preparation for the present that I know of. And the references I made earlier to the lady who's president of Hunter College and my old friend, the former Jesuit dramatize what's happened in the Catholic Church as an institution attempting to respond to the changes. As a result of a number of decisions growing out of Vatican II, Catholics have had to unlearn

a lot of things formally recently, and as I said we all have trouble unlearning things. They've had to unlearn, for example, that you can't eat meat on Friday; as you can now. They've had to unlearn all of those things they've been taught about St. Christopher. I have a statue of Charlie Brown on my dashboard, and as I drive along his head goes back and forth like this. The problem of unlearning is heavy upon us. Anyhow, the 180 degree turn that education needs to make is from looking backwards to looking ahead. As Buckminster Fuller says, "I'm interested in the future because that's where Im going to spend the rest of my life." I'm afraid it's uncomfortably true that we're going to get very little help from the past. Schooling consists mostly of memorizing old answers to old questions. And the questions are no longer relevant, which is what a lot of the kids are hollering about. The answers aren't either. What we need to do is turn around and look at the present and to the future and learn how to ask questions that need to be asked rather than just memorize old answers.

It seems to me that the media provide the best opportunity for us to do this. The media have the attention and the emotional devotion of the kids. I run a course in media back where I work, and the students are all junior and senior high school teachers in the city of New York, which is not the easiest place to be a junior or senior high school teacher. In the course of their turning around from the past to the present they seem to notice a metamorphosis in the kids, and they say, "The kids are different, the kids have changed." That's a curious thing; it seems to me that the kids have always been whatever they are but the teachers perception of them has changed. The energy is gone from trying to force the kids' attention to a lot of times and places that have no meaning for them whatsoever and permitting them to start to figure out what the current media that do have their attention and devotion mean.

There was a study reported on this point in PSYCHOLOGY TODAY two issues back, a kind of I. A. Richards attempt to find out what meanings adolescents made from their records, or the lyrics of the records they listen to. And the results were pretty much the same that Richards got with his students at Cambridge 50 years ago. The kids really don't know what sense to make of the lyrics. Operationally, the lyrics are meaningless. They're responding almost entirely to what might be called the affective content than the cognitive content, except for a very small percentage of the students. It seems to me I. A Richards' study, 50 years old now, reinforced more recently by James Squire's NCTE study, has a lot of implications for us in turning our attention and the students' attention to media. Richards found that honor students in literature at Cambridge were no better equipped to identify a viable meaning for a poem than the rest of us. They simply didn't know how to go about it. They were very good at memorizing someone else's meaning but they were at sixes and sevens when left with the task of figuring out a meaning on their own. And Squire's recent study reports that the responses of adolescents while reading four short stories were about the same. The kids don't know how to go about the processes of making meanings, even in print.

It seems to me the task we all face moment-to-moment in our daily lives, is essentially that of making meanings. One of the things that strikes me at plays where you have a nominally sophisticated audience, well educated if the amount of time spent in school is any index, is that between acts in the lobby, the main job everyone is addressing himself to is figuring out the meaning of what he just saw. And I seem to sit in motion picture theaters in front of the same two old ladies all the time. One has peanut brittle, as nearly as I can tell, and the other has popcorn and they are explaining the film to each other all through it and their meanings are never anywhere near mine and I've never yet had the temerity to say, "Ladies, Please!"

The toughest job we all have, especially in a rapidly changing environment where the old meanings aren't usable, is figuring out what the heck things mean. And as far as I know we get no help anywhere in our schooling in how to make meanings. It still strikes me as incredible that with all the years we spend in school dealing with questions, we get no training in how to ask questions. We spend so much time memorizing somebody else's answers to somebody else's questions, we never get a chance to figure out the questions we should be asking about meanings that are important to us. The big trick is always to turn catastrophe into opportunity, and most of us view media as a tremendous catastrophe, an incursion on the old school job which they certainly are. But we can turn that catastrophe into opportunity if we want to help our student make meanings in an uncertain future and can agree that the answers from the past are less and less useful. The values of the past, you know, are the ones we operated on and are still operating on, right up to the present, that have turned the environment into such a foul place that it's a serious question whether the human race can survive past the next 30 years. That's what the old values produced, and that's what the kids are saying, "You want us to believe that?" "To do this?" They want to make the world a better place, and I think if we want to help them make it a better place and enhance our survival prospects as individuals and as a group, we're going to have to learn how to ask the kinds of questions that will permit the meanings we need to survive. The old ones simply don't work.

The media provide an opportunity, and I think Conferences like this will direct your attention to the crucial role of the media and provide you with examples of what some teachers are doing. Testimonies from teachers working with the media are universally enthusiastic. Kids who have been problems for a long time turn out to be very helpful and very bright and very creative when you don't confine them to pursuing that relentless line of black print, page after page, year after year, to no particular purpose of any importance to anyone.

The most traditional function of education for at least 2000 years in western culture has been to develop the students' sophistication in the use of the media of communication that are most contemporaneous. Before writing, the Trivium consisted of Grammar, Rhetoric, and Logic because the most important medium was speech. Print literacy was the dominant task of the schools while print was the dominant medium. But print has long since passed out of the role of predominant medium for any purpose. It isn't even the most important medium for the storage, historically, of information. I talked to two guys recently who have the job of inventing new electronic modes of storing information. They work for an outfit called IBM (which I think really owns the world). One of these guys had recently developed a way of storing information that would take, he said, about 10,000 volumes of printed books, and put them electronically in a one inch metallic cube. That's one mode of response to the problem of how many acres you can devote to card catalogs.

In any case, the media provide, I think, the best chance for turning catastrophe into opportunity. The poetry the kids dig today--and they really do--mostly exists on LP records. Poetry has never been a more potent instrument for political and social change in our society than it is right now. Almost none of it appears in print; as a matter of fact the kids resent it, at least the kids I work with, if you try to peel the lyrics off the record and put them in print. They say "It's not the same thing, man. Don't sit me down with those marks on a piece of paper." The words are in that musical context and they have to hit me in the ears, not in the eyes. In any case, media provide one of the best ways for our re-defining the subject of English, and it's going to take some re-definition, for re-defining the function of education and for re-defining our roles as teachers.

And the sooner I shut up and we get out of here, the sooner we'll see some practical examples of how some of your own friends and colleagues, right in the neighborhood here, are trying to do that. Thank you and good luck in your struggles with the media.

MAN IN CONFLICT: A PROGRAM DESIGNED FOR THE ENGLISH OPEN SPACE

Cynthia Blankenship, Martha Pomainville and Barbara Stanford
Fairview High School, Boulder, Colorado

We climbed through the piles of boxes and boards that cluttered the entrance to the English area in our new high school building. When we finally reached the area we found rooms were like none we had ever seen. They were triangular, hexagonal and trapezoidal shaped, and along one side was a large open area, about the size of three ordinary classrooms. Like many schools today, we had decided to try to develop a more flexible program, and one of the components of our program was an open space area.

The first attempts of our English staff to teach in this space were unsatisfactory, possibly because there were so many problems involved in using the space. For one thing, our school district decided to try to save money and left out the acoustical tile in the ceiling of the space. The competing sounds of a demonstration in popular music and a videotape on science fiction were deafening even to the ears of students conditioned to the sounds of the rock bands. In addition to the noise problem, the computer scheduling defeated many who would have liked to innovate a program in the open space, by putting three totally opposed courses in the space at the same time. Not many people care to team Shakespeare and Science Fiction. To complicate the problem, our class schedules were not given to us until a few days before we were to begin. As a result, teachers who might have worked together well, did not have time to organize their classes. Teachers started working together, and found out about five weeks into the semester that their methods didn't mix. Others found that methods that were sure-fire in an open classroom didn't work in open space. Lecturing to 75 wiggling sophomores proved more difficult than lecturing to 25. With teaching four other courses, teachers didn't have enough time to evaluate and correct their mistakes on the spot.

Cindy Blankenship, Barbara Stanford and I were much luckier than the teachers who had to teach in the open space first semester becuase we had the benefit of their past experience, and we had time to plan together. We still had some difficulties to overcome. The computer scored again by scheduling three different courses into the open space at the same time. Cindy was to teach a course called Man in Conflict, a literature course that involved reading books from prescribed listing and discussing them. Barbara was to teach a course in Individualized Reading where the students read books in class and individually report on them. Along with these courses, I was supposed to teach a Composition Course in the open space. Imagine those silent readers of Barbara' trying to concentrate against the din of a composition lab and a rousing discussion on man's inner conflicts.

Faced with these problems, the three of us decided that we could have the best of all possible worlds by combining the three courses. We took the title, Man in Conflict, which would give us the freedom to allow the students to study various aspects of modern life. From the Individualized Reading course, we incorporated a free choice of reading materials and individual book conferences, and from Composition, we included writing and discussion skills.

Once we decided to join forces, we had to choose basic objectives for Man in Conflict that would encompass the objectives of all three courses and would be useful to the students in their everyday lives. The following were our four main objectives:

1. The student will take responsibility for his own learning.
2. He will understand himself better.
3. He will develop tools to deal with the world more effectively.
4. He willbroaden his knowledge of events and trends that affect him.

After we had formulated our objectives, we had to meet and plan the overall structure of the course. We decided not only to let the student choose his own books but also the units that he wanted to study. We tried to pick units that would fit in with the Man in Conflict theme and that would interest a wide range of people. Eventually our list included War and Peace, Man and Woman, Future Shock, Horror, Conflict, Loneliness, Mental Illness, The Occult, The Generation Gap, Values, Love, Popular Music, Death, Communications, Evil, and Philosophy and Religion.

Since we only met two times a week, each unit included five lessons and lasted two and a half weeks. We used every type of learning exercise in these units from creative dramatics to lectures, from discussions to art work.

Since we wanted the students to have a choice of topics to study, we provided for six units to be offered simultaneously. Approximately eight to fourteen students signed up for a unit at a time. When they signed up for their units, they picked up a handout that included a book list of class activities and individual projects for all five lessons. As a unit was completed, students evaluated their progress, and at a given signal, stampeded to the sign-up point for the next units. The teachers were in charge of two units each and would use the students' self-evaluations to give them their final grades on the unit.

Teaching Man in Conflict took much more work than we expected. Planning together for six units every two and a half weeks took more time than planning for our other classes. But we feel that it has been worth the effort, for course evaluations both in the spring and the fall of 1972 have been very positive.

After the first few hesitant weeks, students seemed to enjoy their new responsibilities. One girl expressed the feelings of others well as she wrote, in Man in Conflict; "We could pick the topic we wanted. This meant that we were usually more interested and we tried harder to learn something. We could be with the friends or the teachers we wanted." Another student commented on her added responsibilities in this way. "The way the course is designed, you're only going to get something out of it if you contribute. It's all up to us."

Students also commented on the structure of the new class. One student stated, "I liked the freedom, and the discussion best, becuase I felt a part of the class. I don't get that feeling in a closed classroom. I felt I could say what was on my mind whether or not it was wrong." Another said this about the activities in class. "I get more out of doing collages and playing games than discussion."

Besides gaining a greater sense of freedom and responsibility, the students gained a greater knowledge of themselves and others. On being asked how well he contributed to the various groups he was in, one rather intellectual boy said, "After my experiences in the Man in Conflict class, I am firmly convinced that playing the role of Devil's advocate can be fun." Another student commented in this way, "The day I learned the most in this class was the day we were trying to reach a definition of evil for our own. I learned how to use common sense and logic to wipe-out a straight "A" student's "Loopholed," philosophy. I don't mean that all "A" students have poor philosophy, but that a good deal of them care only about getting "A"'s, and in turn sometimes don't learn half of what a "C" student may learn."

Finally, Man in Conflict does seem to give the student a knowledge of the outside world. In writing about the unit on Mental Illness, one girl said, "I think I've learned a lot about this unit, not just through one day, but everyday we met. The discussions, definitions, and the field trip all taught me things, not just about myself of the unit, but about other people's ideas and feelings about mental illness. I really enjoyed the unit on this topic and also the books I read."

After teaching in the open space for a year, we have decided that we like teaching there as well as or better than an open classroom. Our keys to success have been a great deal of preparation, the use of small groups, freedom of choice for students, and a balance between student responsibility and teacher structure.

UTOPIA IN ENGLISH

Robert C. Wylder, California State College at Long Beach

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"Miss Jones, I want to welcome you to Utopia School. I hope that you will enjoy your stay here with us. It is a rather unusual school, as you will see, but we are confident that what we are doing here in an experimental way will lead to improved education for our young people, the kind of education that will equip them to face the post-high school world with confidence. If that world includes college, so much the better, but we do not see our job here as college preparation. We mean to try to educate every student to the peak of his capacity, whether or not he plans to go on.

"You have been assigned to the English Department. Your record of training and subsequent experience indicates that you are a strong, confident teacher willing to innovate and to cut the cloth of your course to fit the pattern of the student. Good. We hired you because you are a competent professional in your specialty but not a narrow specialist. Because we have confidence in your ability and good sense, we mean to give you as much freedom as it is possible to provide in a large school which must coordinate various activities. Any restrictions are strictly technical ones. As you will see, we do not interfere in any way with your conduct in the classroom. If we are wrong in our assessment of you, you will know it and so will we, but we will not dictate how you must proceed. We will simply arrange for your transfer, without prejudice, to another school, a more traditional one in which you may be more effective. That, incidentally, seldom happens. The teachers we select seems to like it here and to thrive on our system.

"Here, in brief, is what we expect of you: we will assign you four classes of twenty-five students each. You are to teach them English. That's all your instructions consist of. You are to find out what they know and can do, what they would like to know and to be able to do, and what you think you can tell them and help them to learn to do. They're your class. You teach them however and whatever you can, taking into account your abilities, training, and enthusiasms on the one hand and their abilities, maturity, and desires on the other. It's simple--but it's also dreadfully hard, for as you can see freedom brings with it a terrible responsibility. But we think you're up to it or we wouldn't have hired you.

"We know that you have a sound major in English and some useful courses in education. You are aware, of course, of the generally accepted division of the subject of English into three components, literature, language, and composition. We hope that you will try to incorporate all of them into your program if you can, though we realize that your special training and talent may lead you to emphasize one over the others. We do suggest strongly that writing of some kind be included in every program. Because writing is so important to the development of the human potential in each child, we feel that writing should be basic in some way to every English course. We hired you partly on the strength of your demonstrated interest in and competence in writing. Not everyone writes as careful and convincing a letter of application as you do.

"While you drink your coffee--sugar?--let me explain in a little more detail how we operate here. This is an intermediate school, of course, what would be traditionally grades seven to nine. Right across the street is the high school

which follows the same plan, ten to twelve. We cooperate fully and even often exchange teachers, so you will really be teaching in the seven-to-twelve school. This year, though, you will have classes of intermediate school age. You will have twenty-five students in a class, non-graded and of course non-tracked. Some students request a particular teacher, and we try to honor such requests once; after that we try to avoid duplication. The other students will be more or less randomly assigned, both sexes, all intermediate school levels, all ability levels. There they are, a heterogenous mass of teachable American youth, a cross-section of tomorrow. Your job is to help each one of them to leave the class at the end of the semester changed for the better in his understanding of literature and language and in his use of spoken and written English. That's an interesting task.

"Just as there are in effect no grades in our school, there are also no grades. A little paradox for you there, Miss Jones. What I mean is that we do not assign grades--A, B, C, and so on, not even P and F. We have not discovered a way to grade fairly and equitably in the first place, we hate to have teachers wasting their time in fruitless and frustrating evaluation in the second place, and we can't fail a student and have him repeat a unit in the third place. Besides, failure never helped anyone to learn; we think the removal of the threat of failure more useful than harmful. Under our system students and teachers alike operate in freedom, not in fear. Though we had a hard time getting some students and most parents accustomed to our system, both now endorse it heartily. As far as our teachers can see, their students learn more now and more willingly, and everyone seeks to work up to capacity. The carrot of freedom, Miss Jones, is more effective than the stick of fear.

"Well, to get back to some further details about your job. You will have only four such classes this year, your first, and no other responsibilities: no newspaper to supervise, no plays to put on, no debate team to ride herd on, nothing except teaching English to 100 assorted intermediate students. You will have an office to yourself adjacent to your classroom, and the central storeroom and workroom will be close. A faculty lounge is provided where you can be free from students if you wish to be. The school will provide a substitute for you and subsidize your attendance to professional conferences.

"Besides that, we have several well trained assistants that you may request whenever your program needs them, you may arrange with one or more colleagues for team teaching if you desire, you may exchange classes with colleagues from time to time if that suits your purpose, and you may invite outside speakers into your classroom at any time on any subject without restriction. The job of the administration is primarily to assist the teachers, the professionals in their fields, to do the best job they can, so don't hesitate to ask for whatever will help you to do your job better. We will stand behind you in any controversies that may arise out of the degree of freedom we offer you in choice of topics and materials you use. As long as you proceed professionally and responsibily we will not interfere in any way. Advice we will always gladly give, orders seldom or never.

"More coffee? All right, let's stroll over to the library while I explain a little about materials available to you. Our librarian is an important part of our faculty. Besides ordering promptly books requested for classes by teachers, he subscribes to journals requested for the use of teachers, such things as the ENGLISH JOURNAL, and buys professional books for the use of teachers, such volumes as Conant on the American high school, Dixon and Muller on the Dartmouth Conference, and Moffett on curriculum development. I think you will find our library really almost a second classroom.

"You will, of course, be more than usually dependent upon it and upon our excellent AV section because we have no assigned texts. No syllabus, not texts: that follows. You decide what you want and we'll get it for you if we don't already have it. We have a rather generous budget for paperbacks and can get them in a hurry. You decide how many you need and we provide them, usually within two days of your order. Our AV center has tapes, films, records, charts, and so on; if what you need is not there, we can get it either for your classroom or for the center. You will see the classroom equipment later this morning.

"Although your classes will be assigned regular daily class meeting times, with a little advance notice we can arrange for lengthened meetings, for eliminating them altogether for a day or more, or for releasing the class for field trips. We have our own buses in case you want your class to visit a library or a play or a newspaper.

"Ah, here we are at an empty classroom. This one is typical of those used in our English program. You see that it is large and light but fairly sound-proof. There are large tables with chairs on one side, a number of movable armchairs on the other so that you can arrange the room to fit the activity. The book shelves are generous so that you can keep a large selection of books on hand at all times. Notice the large blackboards and bulletin boards, the movie screen, the projector, and the typewriters. In some rooms we also have ditto machines; you may have one temporarily or permanently, just as you choose. You will notice a clock, but there are no bells. We trust you to play fair in releasing the students in time to get to their next classes.

"Well, that's about it. Do you have any questions? Expensive? Yes, I suppose it is, judged by the standards of the traditional school. In the long run it won't prove so, though, for we think that every student who leaves this school will have a good chance to stay off the streets, off the welfare rolls, and out of jail. He'll cost less than a cheaply produced drop-out from a traditional school who continues to burden society one way or another all his life. No, we at Utopia School consider that no good education is expensive but that all bad education is. We feel that investment in our youth is the best possible way to spend our money.

"All right, then, Miss Jones, we'll see you Monday. Again, welcome to Utopia School."

That'll be the day, won't it, fellow teachers?

INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAM TEACHING AT ALHAMBRA HIGH SCHOOL

Bill Wharton, Alhambra High School, Phoenix

The present Freshman Communications Program at Alhambra High School originated in 1968 when the decision was made to expand Alhambra High School to accommodate an additional 1200 students. The decision to expand the school meant that Alhambra would become one of the largest high schools in the state. With this in mind, the Alhambra faculty was organized to plan instructional programs that might best be housed in a new facility. After months of effort by many people, it was decided that a new program designed to help freshmen adjust to a new school would be desirable.

The program was designed by a committee composed of representatives of all departments at Alhambra. It was decided to combine English, Social Studies, and counseling into an interdisciplinary program to be taught by a team of four teachers and a counselor. A two hour time period for each class and 150 students per class were to be the basis for the program. A building was then designed to accommodate this type of program. As construction of the building proceeded, the program was tested on a limited basis. After one year, reading was added to the original program and a reading teacher was added to each team. In September of 1972, with the completion of the new facility, Freshman Communications became a required course for all 1050 freshman at Alhambra.

The Freshman Communications program as it now exists involves several concepts not usually found in a traditional high school program. First, the program is interdisciplinary. Although each teacher has his own particular speciality, he actually functions in the classroom in all of the three areas which make up the content of Freshman Communications: English, Social Studies, and Reading.

This is necessary because the three areas are not separated within the classroom. Each of the areas is included in the seven units of instruction which make up the curriculum of Freshman Communications. The units of study are Orientation, Mass Communications, Modern Man, Future Man, I Am, Law and Cultures. Within each unit various skills are included. Writing is stressed in every unit while the short story, speech, use of the dictionary, and other English skills are included in various units.

In addition to the interdisciplinary approach, team teaching is utilized. Each team consists of two teachers, two social studies teachers, one reading teacher and one counselor. Team teaching offers many advantages but the major reason it is utilized in the Freshman Communications program is to permit teachers to work with students in various size groups. Only through a team approach can a teacher work with a group of ten or twelve students for an extended period of time. Obviously this means another teacher is working with a large group of students at the same time. However, in a traditional setting this option is not available to the teacher. Additional advantages to team teaching include the opportunity to share ideas with other teachers, thus encouraging creative and innovative classroom instruction. The expertise of each teacher can best be utilized in a team situation. Problems, including discipline, can also be dealt with through a team approach.

The major goal of the program is to teach students self direction. To encourage this, a contract system is used. Each student is allowed to decide for himself which passing grade he wishes to work for. The contract sets forth what he has to do to receive that grade. The student has some unstructured time

during the two hour time period to work on the contract items. The amount of time he has is based on his ability to plan and direct his own activities. Some students have a considerable amount of their time unstructured while others have no time that is not planned for them.

For those students capable of self-direction, the Instructional Materials Center is available in their unstructured time. The Instructional Materials Center is in many ways the heart of the Freshman Communications program. The three large learning centers all open directly into the IMC so that students have direct access to it. The IMC contains a large paperback book collection, film-strips, records, tapes, a wide variety of audio-visual materials, and facilities for video taping. The IMC staff is constantly working with students on both individual and group projects. With facilities and equipment for a variety of activities, the IMC is a production and activity center for Freshman Communications.

One of the most successful aspects of Freshman Communications has been the inclusion of the counselor as part of the instructional team. The counselor has an office in the Freshman Communications classroom and is there for the two hour time period that his freshman counselees are there. Thus the counselor is in or near the classroom most of the time. In this way, the students get to know their counselor right along with their teachers. Since the counselor is a part of the teaching team, teachers and counselors know each other very well and can work with their students as a team.

To understand how Freshman Communications works, it is necessary to look at what the student experiences in the program. When the student reports to his two hour class he reports to an assigned seat in the large learning center for roll and announcements. The remainder of the two hours is divided into three 35 minute time periods. Scheduling is done on a weekly basis. Each week the student must attend two writing groups. These groups remain constant, with the same teacher and students throughout the year. Each writing group has about 25 students in it. In the writing groups certain fundamentals such as punctuation, use of the topic sentence, writing a paragraph, and completing character sketches are stressed. The subjects being written about depend on the unit being studied. Writing is treated as a part of the content, not a separate discipline.

Each student must also attend one discussion each day. Discussion topics depend on the unit of study as does the activity of the writing group. An example of the interdisciplinary nature of the program is as follows. The discussion topic for the week in the "I Am" unit might center on the role of the family and the student's relationship to his family. A possible exercise in writing that week might be to write a paragraph about how the student would treat his own children if he were the head of his family. The discussion topic might also include the teaching of a reading skill.

The student is also expected to attend one "Rap Group" per week. This is a small group of 10-12 students who meet with the same teacher each week. These groups discuss anything the students wish to bring up, including anything about Freshman Communications that they wish to discuss. In many ways, the teacher is functioning as a counselor in this situation.

The remainder of the students' time, usually five 35 minute periods per week, is used to work individually on his contract. A teacher is always available to help him in this situation. The student may wish to see his couselor during this individual study time or work on a project in the centrally located Instructional Materials Center.

Friday is usually structured somewhat differently as it is not divided into

the 35 minute periods. This is the time students schedule themselves for the next week, see films, hear a guest speaker, or receive instruction in the large group of 150. Also, much of the grading is done on Friday with the student present. Each student sits down with his roll group teacher for the purpose of evaluating the work he has produced during the week.

This has actually been the first year of the Freshman Communications program in the facilities designed for the program. Many changes have been made, more will be made in the future, and the program will continue to change and develop. The program will be evaluated in 1973-74 but already certain factors seem clear. Team teaching is hard work but very stimulating. Counselors should be in the classroom as much as possible. Finally, English and reading do not need to be separate courses. They are an integral part of our lives and should be an integral part of instruction in every class.

IS ENGLISH WORTH SAVING?

Patricia Stewart, Miami High School

Today relevance is the word on the tip of every tongue--student, parent, teacher. If a subject is not "relevant" then it is thought to be a waste of time or worse, and many aspects of the "Old English" have been tried and convicted of the "crime" of irrelevancy. What then can be done; shall we rid ourselves of the English program after students are taught the basic fundamentals of reading and writing? Are there aspects of English that are relevant in our modern world; if so what are they? What could today's television-watching generation possibly learn in the English classroom that will help him in the present or the future?

And, suddenly, we realize that we have stumbled upon one of the most important and most relevant of subjects for the English Class, the study of Mass Media--particularly in the area of television. Mass Media, long the province of Journalism classes alone, must be studied by all. People formerly went home from work and school to read or play games. Today, they rush home to watch their favorite comedy, variety, and detective shows and then cap the evening with the Monday night movie or Saturday night movie as the case may be. Those who have a maximum of endurance or require a minimum of sleep stay up still longer to watch talk shows and the late, late, late show.

Ask a student to identify a picture of Johnny Carson and explain who he is and he will do so immediately, but ask him to do the same for William Rogers and he will probably be unable to. According to Robert L. Hilliard, FCC Commissioner, studies have shown that by the time a child enters kindergarten he has already spent more hours learning about the world in front of the television set than he will spend in a college classroom getting a bachelor's and a master's degree. In his first eighteen years on earth, the average U.S. child spends 22,000 hours watching television (EXPLORING TELEVISION by William Kuhns). It is foolish to educationally ignore a medium to which the American public devotes so much time. Today, television has endless possibilities for educational and entertainment purposes; it also, due to its large audiences, has unlimited power for good or evil.

Closed circuit television is used to catch bank robbers and shoplifters indoors. Lately, its use has been expanded to "watching" the streets for crimes committed in two Eastern cities. We are on the brink of an era when the average person can afford to prerecord programs on cassettes in his own set and play them back at his convenience. Eventually, television will be three dimensional, and tomorrow's children will scoff at the type of viewing available today.

They probably will watch a flat wall set on which three dimensional characters appear in color, of course. They will become even more involved in their viewing than today's mesmerized audiences and many of Marshall McLuhan's "revolutionary" ideas will be accepted truisms. Already a few observers recognize that television is creating, as McLuhan says, "a new for of 'politics' which the majority haven't yet noticed. The living room has become a voting booth. Participation via television in freedom marches, in war, revolution, pollution and other events is changing everything."

All of the ways television can now be utilized bring us to a point when the American public must become aware of the media's role in a democratic society. They must understand the processes involved in television production and the problems which can be encountered so that their viewing attitude can be more

objective and questioning, rather than subjective and passive.

Much of this can be taught through the students' personal involvement in the media. Using video tape, students can produce their own variety, family, comedy, and news shows. The newscasters can utilize school activities for their program information. Students can then examine what happened on the news. Did the camera angles they chose to use give the viewing audience a distorted impression of what had happened? What did the student newscasters do on days when there was little or no important news and they still had a thirty minute time segment to fill? Could the students resolution of the problem be similar to, or the same as, the professional news media's? Did all student newscasters solve their problem in the same manner?

Additional information concerning the effects of television on its viewing audience can be obtained by student surveys. A group of students in one of my Media Classes developed a questionaire on which they asked (1) Are you affected by the advertising offered in television commercials?

Ninety-five percent of the juniors and seniors answering replied that they were not. The next question on the survey asked students to list: (a) their favorite deodorant (b) the type of laundry decergent used by their Mothers (c) the type of toothpaste used by their family. Ninety-seven percent of those answering listed brands heavily advertised on television, making one wonder how much influence television commercials really have.

Students can also explore the psychology of television. Why did thousands of viewers become irate when the moon shot pre-empted "Lost in Space?" What effect, if any, does the size of the image on the screen have on the viewer? Does it influence him in some subtle way to see a cigar, during a commercial, which is the same size as a missile that has just blasted off for the moon. Why does the appeal of genres of shows seem to run in cycles? Detective shows top the ratings a few seasons and then give way to variety shows or vice versa. Does the media shape the time or time the media?

For years we have spent hours in English classes telling about the different types of propaganda devices used in advertising and felt we have done all that was necessary in educating students in regard to the media and its methods. We haven't discussed the methodology used by newscasters to earn the unfailing faith of the public, nor have we mentioned the more subtle masculine, feminine, family and ethnic images which are foisted upon us daily by our favorite programs. Students should be encouraged to look carefully at the roles of the women in the situation comedies, the men in the detective shows, etc. and ask themselves if these are true reflections of actual roles in American society. If they are not, have they previously been aware of this fact?

The subject of television study should be chiefly one of creating a thinking, questioning attitude; not of dictating a host of irrelevant facts for memorization. (Whoops, there's that word again.)

With courses such as media study, film, humor, creative writing and reading which we at Miami High School along with numerous other schools, (though the movement is by no means sufficiently widespread) have added to our curriculum, English departments can no longer be accused of committing the sin of irrelevancy and the oft heard cry, "Why do we have to take English?" will become but an echo from the past.

The books listed below represent a small part of the immense amount of material available to those interested in the Mass Media--particularly television.

Robert K. Baker and Sandra J. Ball, VIOLENCE AND THE MEDIA, Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969.
Jay G. Blumler and Denis McQuail, TELEVISION IN POLITICS, Chicago: U of Chicago Press, 1969.
J.A.C. Brown, TECHNIQUES OF PERSUASION: FROM PROPAGANDA TO BRAINWASHING, Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1963.
Jacques Ellul, PROPAGANDA, NY: Knopf, 1965.
Fred W. Friendly, DUE TO CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND OUR CONTROL...., NY: Vintage, 1967.
Ann Christine Heintz, PERSUASION, Chicago: Loyola U Press, 1971. (Student Work Text)
Nicholas Johnson, HOW TO TALK BACK TO YOUR TELEVISION SET, Boston: Little, Brown, 1970.
Joseph T. Klapper, THE EFFECTS OF MASS COMMUNICATION, Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1969.
William Kuhns, EXPLORING TELEVISION, Chicago: Loyola U Press, 1971. (Student Work Text)
Robert MacNeil, THE PEOPLE MACHINE, NY: Harper, 1968.
Joe McGinniss, THE SELLING OF THE PRESIDENT 1968, NY: Trident Press, 1969.
Marshall McLuhan, UNDERSTANDING MEDIA: THE EXTENSIONS OF MAN, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1965.
Paul C. Merrill and Ralph L. Lowenstein, MEDIA, MESSAGES AND MEN, NY: David McKay Company, 1971.
John Phelan, ed., COMMUNICATIONS CONTROL: READINGS IN THE MOTIVES AND STRUCTURES OF CENSORSHIP, NY: Sheed and Ward, 1969.
Harry J. Shornia, TELEVISION AND SOCIETY: AN INQUEST AND AGENDA FOR IMPROVEMENT, NY: McGraw-Hill, 1965.
William Small, TO KILL A MESSENGER: TELEVISION NEWS AND THE REAL WORLD, NY: Hastings House, 1970.
Gary A. Steiner, THE PEOPLE LOOK AT TELEVISION, NY: Knopf, 1963.
John Whale, THE HALF-SHUT EYE: TELEVISION AND POLITICS IN BRITAIN AND AMERICA, NY: St. Martin's Press, 1969.

ACCOUNTABILITY ENGLISH STYLE: DIALOGUE, A TWO-WAY STREET, THE CARDS ON THE TABLE--A POSITION PAPER FROM THE CENTRAL CALIFORNIA COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

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(This paper developed from the Central California Council of Teachers of English Curriculum Study Commission special invitational conference April 3-5, 1971; edited at the Asilomar Language Arts Conference XXL, September 24-26, 1971. Richard Worthen and Florence Cohen, Co-Chairmen. It is here reprinted from the February 1972 CALIFORNIA ENGLISH JOURNAL by permission of the publisher and Mr. Worthen.)

English teachers have always been accountable in the sense that they have formulated long-term goals and immediate objectives with concern first for their students, and second for their colleagues and the many communities--local, state, national and world--to which they have a recognized responsibility. They have been willing to communicate their aims and the outcomes of their teaching. This willingness has motivated the publication of libraries full of books and papers on goals and objectives in English, on the art of English instruction, and on the evaluation of such instruction so that teaching could be appropriate to the learning situation.

Apparently ignoring these activities, which represent the professional commitment of thousands of thoughtful teachers, proponents of the "educational engineering" approach make such sweeping statements as, "The product of our educational process has never been evaluated." In questioning the appropriateness of the metaphor which equates a student and his educational progress with a "product," English teachers take serious issue with the idea that evaluation has not always been a fundamental part of their daily ministry to their students.

"But," say the educational engineers, "we want to know the cost per unit of learning. Therefore, we wish teachers to state their goals and objectives in terms of the behavior of their students at the completion of instruction, and we wish these results to be quantifiable."

ARE RESULTS PREDICTABLE?

English teachers, mindful of the old saying about doctors of medicine that a quack is one who guarantees results, wish to forestall quackery in education by pointing out that there is no way of guaranteeing the results of any instruction, just as there is no way of guaranteeing the results of medical treatment. The doctor can foresee the results of the chain smoker's behavior and can advise him to give up smoking, but the physician is not, in fairness, to be held accountable if the patient lights up in the corridor as he leaves or at the bar on the corner with his friends. No more can teachers force behavior on students or control the society in which they move. No one can predict what a child will learn or when he will learn it. Who but a charlatan would venture to guarantee any particular behavior of human beings?

English teachers affirm that education is that process which provides opportunities for new experiences to the learner, experiences which he encounters and assimilates until new learnings become part of his repertoire for dealing with his own life experiences. However, it would be destructive to assume that these learnings are acquired in some simple manner. Literalists who presume that neat and simply worded objectives can be attained fail to understand that learning is

not always linear and logical but is often unpredictably simultaneous and physchological.

The art of teaching lies in the teacher's ability to perceive the student's needs and to arrange optimal environments for extending his range of experience. Often these needs will arise or can be cued to arise at about the same time for a number of students so that group instruction can take place, but just as often the student's needs will be unique, so that the teacher's skills will be called upon to deal with each one's needs individually. In some cases a student's need can be fulfilled by a few seconds of class time taken to answer a puzzling question; in others, even years of trying to understand his problems and helping him to solve them may not be enough. The goals of teaching when they relate to student needs are impossible to predict as to kind, duration, or outcome. Attempting to force teachers to predict the needs and preconceive the outcomes can only lead to misunderstanding by the public of what the learning process is.

Well-meaning people who do not understand this aspect of education mistake a necessary tentativeness and openness to improvisation for confusion of purpose, inadequate teaching skill, or a failure of the will to teach. Ironically, even though more students are entering college better prepared academically than ever before, and teachers are providing a wider opportunity for a greater number of students, schools are being confronted with a demand to be "accountable" because of an implied failure, a superficial broadside being leveled in these times at other political and social institutions as well.

IS THE ENGLISH TEACHER ACCOUNTABLE?

In the face of such popular misconceptions, English teachers want to say plainly (1) who they believe they are accountable to, and (2) who is properly accountable to them.

The English teacher is first accountable to his students. It is his obligation to be aware of the full range of his student's needs. He is responsible for communicating with his students and for using all his experiences. He is continually responsible for apprising them of their progress in appropriately challenging activities.

Next, the English teacher is accountable to his colleagues, both within his discipline and outside of it. Within his discipline he is responsible for taking part in a continuing professional dialogue that clarifies his perceptions and procedures for his fellow teachers in English. He is responsible for testing his ideas against those of others, including ideas which he discovers in publications and other media. This dialogue provides the forum within which methods and ideas can be tested for their validity and usefulness. It is the means by which the teacher continually renews himself professionally.

Colleagues in other disciplines form the next circle of accountability. They should understand what the English teacher is doing not only because they are a group who do much to disseminate information and attitudes about English teaching to individuals and groups outside of the teaching profession, but because they too have a stake in what the English teacher is trying to accomplish.

English teachers are next accountable to the parents of their students, and to the larger local community which supports the schools. Again the English teacher perceives this accountability in terms of a dialogue in which parents and community representatives should participate actively with teachers both in the determination of the purposes of education and in the understanding of what is

happening in the classroom.

Last, the English teacher is accountable to the more distant levels of community, such as other local, state, and national groups--educational, political, business, and social. Dialogue at these levels is most effectively carried on through the professional organizations designed to promote and protect the welfare of English teaching and the discipline of English as a whole.

The basis of a workable accountability at all of these levels is honest dialogue. In the past, the framework for such a dialogue did not exist, and the dilemma the total community faces now about its schools can be--in part--attributed to its absence. If English teachers could have afforded in the past to avoid this dialogue with other participants in the educational enterprise, they can no longer afford to do so, for this luxury of detachment has been destroyed by the conditions and tensions that exist today. Today's realities demand dialogue, and English teachers need to be a part of it. Indeed, by talent and training, they are ideally suited to initiate it.

WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE TO THE ENGLISH TEACHER?

Just as important as the English teacher's accountability to his students, to his colleagues, and to the communities at all levels which have a responsible interest in his activities, is the accountability of each of these groups to the teacher of English. First of all, students are accountable to the teacher of English for being active participants in the learning process. Parents are accountable to the teacher of English for the out-of-school hours of their children. They must supply a nurturing environment which permits the student to come to school in a teachable condition. At the same time, because of the unique vantage point from which they can witness the learning patterns in their children, parents can be valuable colleagues of the teacher of English in developing appropriate learning programs. If they understand the implications, they will join with English teachers to resist any mechanistic attempt to consider their children identical "product units."

Administrators and others who provide the school climate are accountable to the English teacher for protecting and fostering the teaching process. The wider communities are accountable for providing the financial, cultural, and social support for carrying on the education of children in English subjects.

WHAT MUST THE TEACHER DO?

These mutually accountable groups must be made aware of the folly of expecting teachers to make some prior guarantee of student performance. It is therefore now the English teacher's obligation to take up an active role in clarifying for himself, his students, his colleagues, and his several communities, just what he is trying to do in the educational process, what conditions he needs in order to have a chance of success, and what means may be used to evaluate that success.

English teachers insist that they must be the interpreters to the public of the purposes of English instruction and of the terms for describing its results. They believe that they can most clearly explain the necessary and desirable changes which have taken place in English classrooms in recent years.

Rather than trying to state unrealistic goals and objectives which cannot be met, English teachers can delineate the kinds of experiences they plan to provide for their students so that parents can understand the program. More meaningful ways of evaluating the success of English programs than "immediately

observable behavior" or "objective tests" are many and varied: for example, tapes revealing patterns of language development, files of sample papers, quality and quantity of reading, attendance at plays or other cultural events, or evidence of a positive, critical attitude toward the media.

English teachers believe that they are now, and always have been, accountable for the results of their instruction, taking into account the conditions under which they have been expected to work, the social and cultural climate of the schools and the school systems in which they have taught, and the state of the civilization of which they and the other members of the educational enterprise are a part. Now it is the duty of English teachers to foster a deeper understanding among all people who have a stake in the educational process.

ENGLISH, COMMUNITY STYLE

Margueritte Caldwell and Shirley Pogal, Sunnyside High School, Tucson

ARE YOU AN ENGLISH TEACHER FOR THE 70'S?

If you don't know and want to find out, check the appropriate spaces below:

no___ yes___ 1. Do you consider yourself a cool teacher?
no___ yes___ 2. Do you take home a battered briefcase of the same themes, every year?
no___ yes___ 3. Do you find yourself always searching for motivational devices?
no___ yes___ 4. Do you demand a well-structured classroom?
no___ yes___ 5. Are you concerned about the basic skills in an elective program?
no___ yes___ 6. Do you find it difficult to relate English activities to student interest?
no___ yes___ 7. Would you worry about your enrollment if English requirements were dropped?
no___ yes___ 8. Would you consider holding any of your English classes in a hospital?
no___ yes___ 9. Do you want your class to be an answer to career education?
no___ yes___ 10. Has your teaching become routine?

If you have checked more no's than yes's, stop here. Read another article. Unless you are willing to undergo a pedagogical metamorphosis.

What makes teachers willing to change? Two things: Dissatisfaction with students' performance. Dissatisfaction with self-performance. When students become passive and teaching becomes mechanical, the diagnosis is obvious: find another way. What way is open to us? What kind of class can we create that will excite and involve students, challenge the teacher, and retain the 'good' of the old way? Our answer is Community Action Through Reading and English (C.A.R.E.).

This program, taught by two teachers, is a one semester English-reading class for 11th and 12th graders who are not overly enthusiastic about school, who may be seriously deficient in reading, writing and oral language skills, and who have had little or no positive recognition. It is a class for students who are mature, willing to become involved with their community and to go the extra mile for others. It is a class which promotes the use of reading and writing in life-size situations by having the students apply those skills out in the community as a teacher's aide, a tutor, as a junior teacher, or as a hospital volunteer. It is a class which turns the turned-off kid on.

Because of flexible scheduling, the class meets four times a week: three times for 55 minutes and once for 90 minutes. The graph below may clarify:

Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays
10:30-11:25	10:30-11:25	10:30-11:25	9:00-10:35	No class

The highlight of the week of course is Thursday, when the students do field work. The class, usually held to 30 enrollees, is presently divided among one head-start program, two elementary schools, one junior high, and two hospitals. Each location defines the exact role of the students. Some teachers/supervisors want original lessons prepared and executed by our students; others give out exact jobs; others want the student to help carry out the established curriculum or routine. But whatever the task, the students arrive at their locations about 9:10 and leave about 10:25. They return full of enthusiasm, rapping about their

experience and reflecting insights as one group meets another. It vividly carries them through the week until the next Thursday.

The other three days of the week are charged with activities which either show up their communicative skills or open paths to new ones.

Customarily Monday is a day for housekeeping chores or English skill building or oral language development or occasionally an examination of educational and personal values. The materials range widely including ones such as editorials from the Sunday or daily paper, articles from current magazines, poetry, short stories, records, or Sesame Street tapes. The activities vary from defining terms met on Thursdays such as uremia and behaviorism to writing puppet scripts.

On Monday the students hand in their observations and evaluations based on their experiences of the preceding Thursday. Early in the semester we encourage them to share their enthusiasm with the entire class, with students making brief ordered reports or having group leaders speak for them. It is a good day for them to practice panel techniques, the duties of a group participant, the courtesies in listening or the art of asking questions and the relevance of replies.

Or it is a day to learn about the qualities of a good lesson plan, to practice lesson-making with valid objectives and suitable activities. Here they learn about the concept of an audience and what materials are suitable.

Finally, it is the class period in which they learn or review how to find the main idea and what a summary is because the next day, they put this reading skill to work in the library.

We schedule C.A.R.E. in the library on Tuesday although we can easily cancel when the school or class calendar strains the schedule. But usually the class meets in the LRC where we have seen students actually use library time to improve not only their skills in finding materials but also in getting the main points from those articles and books. For they read with a purpose and a deadline: to learn more about the kinds of people they work with and/or to find materials for them on Thursday, the day after tomorrow. Their reading goes down on a 4x6 card in the form of a summary complete with bibliography. These are handed in Wednesday and usually returned the next Monday.

Because so much turns on Community Day, we set aside every Wednesday for the students to work out their lesson plans for Thursday with our close supervision. Although the students are told that they could expect one or two home assignments per week, these cannot include the lesson planning, at least not at first. The idea of what to teach and why is too new and difficult for the students to handle by themselves. And since the lesson plan is a major source of critical thinking and creativity, and since it is the basis of success for the community performance, it deserves our help and class time. Wednesday is hard work.

If any of the community assignments that week do not lend themselves to a formal lesson, then Wednesday becomes a workshop to write articles for the class newsletter or letters to the editor and School Board, or it is a day for making puppets.

The week is full. It is taxing on both students and teachers but it brings a new flavor to success.

Just how did we go about starting such a class? In retrospect, the tasks

were formidable: details, red tape, obstacles, school regulations, meetings, meetings, phone calls, phone calls, phone calls.

First of all we sketched what we would have to do to get there. Conditions at Sunnyside High School were right: the flexible schedule gave us a 90 minute period which is more suitable for working in the community although 55 minutes could be adequate. In our survey of the community, we found institutions geographically close enough for students to travel there, work, and return within the time slot. We uncovered both the need, the facilities and the acceptance on the part of the supervisors. The Electives Program of the English Department furnished the necessary climate.

Second, we sought administrative approval for the class and tentatively surveyed student interest. Both systems said go.

Next we included a class description in the English course of study and during pre-registration we sold our program in junior and senior classes, stressing as much as possible the idea of applying skills, going to school away from school, the kinds of student we would accept, and the special requisites. We wanted more than the alloted thirty students to select the class because we had to make sure that the right student enrolled. Each had to be interviewed to see if he understood the rationale for C.A.R.E., the need for excellent attendance, and dependability. For once in the class the student would be expected to stay. This brief interview is crucial.

Furthermore, students also had to assume the job of informing their parents about the class with the help of a form letter. The parents had to call one of us so that we were sure that they knew about the class and approved of their sons'/daughters' going off campus once a week in a faculty-driven or student-driven car.

When the class had materialized, the next important time block was the first three weeks of the semester. During this time, the students had to be oriented to the community stations and make their choices. They had to meet their supervisors, learn about their students and the suitability of materials, and walk through a lesson plan. They had to examine their reasons and our objective for the class and what the term "community involvement" meant. They started learning more about themselves. A large order for just one week but it set the tone and the pace for the following weeks.

The second week, the students participated in an orientation, meeting their supervisors, teachers and patients, observing, evaluating activities out in the community and learning the routine of those locations. Simultaneously they were reviewing communicative skills. Thursday of the third week, the students actually worked in the community.

Why did we begin this class? Which of us who began teaching ten or more years ago cannot remember some nebulous time in the sixties when student unrest seethed on high school and college campuses, and we felt in our classrooms the tremors generated by the assassination of idealistic leaders? Which of us was not shaken by students in our classes who no longer politely responded to lectures on Dickens and who silently submitted fewer completed exercises from Warriner's? At some time, then, during the advent of the paperbacks and the rise of the student-centered classroom, a question began to nag at us: Can an English class bridge the gap between the fanciful world of school and the real world? Perhaps that question more than any other consideration, led us to look for another way.

Looking back, it seems now that we could have anticipated this collision of the two worlds--the fanciful and the real--with students sitting in classes in the morning and tying themselves to jobs in the afternoons and evenings; with the information explosion preventing teachers from being the total dispensers of knowledge, and with "instant gratification," becoming the unvoiced slogan of American life, how could we not feel confined within the 30x35 foot boundaries of a classroom? We had a choice: bring the outside world in or take the inside world out. We chose the latter.

We looked around at other departments and learned that English was not the only discipline being pressed by students and communities to make education a part of living rather than a preparation for life. The demand to provide an immediate use of skills learned in the classroom was being answered by the vocational departments through such programs as DECCA, ICE, and HERO for similar reasons. In other areas, we saw more students involved; more students committed; more students initiating. In all these programs, there seemed to be a common factor: learning is doing.

Yet another thrust that we could not ignore was career education. We felt its reverberations not only in vocational classes but also in the English hall. Initially, and even now, we see the dangers in endorsing another trend, but we also see incorporating its strength into an English program. When students work in other schools, in hospitals, libraries and social programs and when they deal with medical staffs, social workers, librarians and community leaders as they do in C.A.R.E., the students are receiving career education in English as well as in welding.

In addition to these reasons for looking for alternate ways to structure English classes, we found that the classroom gave inadequate training for the student to reach the objectives of the curriculum. Where--in the traditional structure--did we provide a testing ground for students to develop poise, resourcefulness and proficiency in language? How can the student know that it is not snobbery that causes an English teacher to flinch at the sound of "I don't got none," or know that to avert one's eyes and maintain a silent tongue can have more serious consequences than receiving a "5?" So we hypothesized that if the student discovered his shortcomings in communicative skills, he would return to the classroom motivated to overcome them. Was our hypothesis valid? We're beginning to think so.

Finally, buried below all this rationale lies the nerve center that probably unites all English teachers: we teach literature because of the beauty of the words and its values; we teach composition to discipline thinking and encourage creative expression; and we teach speech to improve oral communication. But we teach English because somewhere in our chemistry we believe that we have the responsibility for improving the human condition. Right now we feel that through this kind of class we have found another way to wed the empathy we build for Lear and Willy Loman with the parallel structure and power of Kennedy's inaugural address.

How successful is the class? Successful enough, in a high school of 1500 students, with 47% Mexican-American, 2% Indian, 1% Black and the rest Anglo. It is successful in a community which is a small school district in Greater Tucson, where many of the homes are moderately priced tract housing and mobile homes. At Sunnyside High School, less than 40-45% of the graduates continue their education, although more are going on because of the community colleges. The number of institutions where our students can work are limited, yet there are enough to furnish our thirty students with more than enough learning stations.

We think the class would work in any high school except in those places which are too small to have institutions other than the elementary grades.

But how do we know that the program is effective other than what our own biased observations tell us. Because the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test shows that students improve their scores through the reading assignments in this kind of class. Because their lesson planning becomes more skillful. Because they write better summaries at the close of a semester. Because they ask us to help them find library materials less frequently at the end of the semester than they did at the beginning.

The class has reached maximum enrollment for the third time. The director of the Veterans' Hospital Extended Nursing Care Unit has asked us to double the number of students for this semester. Six elementary teachers again requested our students for their classrooms. The headstart director of volunteer work contacted us last fall to ask that our students return to head start programs and we have more requests for tutors than we can fill. We know it's effective because the attendance of the kind of student in this class has improved.

We know it's effective because on-sight supervisors write positive evaluations of the students; the patients are disappointed when our students change semesters; and parents take the time to call us again on the phone to express their gratitude and pleasure in the changed attitude that their child has toward school.

What problems does this class present? Many. No class, regardless of who teaches it, how it is taught, or who is in it, lacks problems. This one is no exception. In fact, after teaching C.A.R.E. for three semesters, we feel that not only do the problems differ in kind from those in other classes, they also differ in number. There are more.

First of all, because the class holds the promise of being different, it is difficult to find ways to teach the "basic skills" so that they are presented to students in a more palatable way and so that students can readily see a relationship between the skill they are learning in class and what they are doing in the community. Even though our day in the library, for example, will find the students locating, reading, and writing about such topics as "geriatric medicine" or "malnutrition and learning ability," nonetheless, some students will still balk at learning library skills. This holds true for other skills, as well. Revising the punctuation of an original puppet play script that will be presented in the community still requires punctuation skill, drill, and application of rules. To some, this lesson will bring the familiar question, "Why do we have to punctuate it when we are going to say it, anyway?"

Directly related to the first problem is another. We have found that we cannot cram all the content of a traditional class into this course. Our students cannot be reading as much literature and receiving as much writing instruction as they can in another class.

Third, we face the problem of becoming a "facilitator of learning" a "resource person." But what does that demand? It demands a superabundance of creativity and resourcefulness, particularly because our students are working in fields in which we have had limited training or background. Trying to help a student plan a worthwhile and creative lesson for a group of five-year-old headstart children or for a 29 year old patient who is waiting for a kidney transplant is far more taxing than planning a creative lesson on the transcendental poets for thirty students. And taking this one step further--to be able to lead

the student into doing this kind of creative thinking for himself and eventually being able to take the responsibility for his own planning, is something we work toward all semester and which we do not always achieve.

Coordinating, supervising, and evaluating all the students in six programs in only an hour and a half each Thursday morning poses another major problem. Even allowing that there are two teachers, each of us has to hit three different places weekly. At each location, we have to deal briefly with the student's supervisor, visit with the individual or group with whom our student works, and evaluate and make suggestions to the student about the effectiveness of the immediate activity. Doing this three times in one and a half hours is exhausting, and we have yet to face the rest of our classes. C.A.R.E. accounts for only 1/5 of our teaching, and we frequently ask each other whether we can afford the time and energy this class requires for only 30 students.

So far, we have presented three problems and have yet to speak of another major concern in the program: keeping student morale high when new sets of experiences threaten them. We teachers have learned to accept tedium, lack of student progress, and learned to place personal problems second to teaching a good lesson. But is it realistic to expect the same from high school students? Our students regularly complain their students or patients "don't seem to be getting anywhere," or "the kids didn't like my lesson."

But even more, they don't understand our insistence about "writing down" their objectives, materials, activities, and evaluations for each day that they go out. They want to be moved to a new assignment if they run into difficulty with a supervisor or a child; they want to stop for a donut before returning to their next class at school; they want a good grade for the week for performance on their job in spite of the fact they may not have performed in other sessions that week. They don't want us to expect them to prepare a "bag of tricks."

And finally, we face a problem that we share with every teacher in a classroom today: from all sides--the community, the boards of education, the parents, the students--comes the plea for "schools for the 70's" while they boggle our minds by binding us to the archaic machinery, the rules, the legality and the traditions of the 20's. We are beseeched to innovate and simultaneously we are accused of not teaching the basics. We are reminded that we should capitalize upon the electronic age and our field trip is canceled because the bus broke down. We are told that we can't give our kids homework because they miss out on work opportunities, but we are reprimanded for not inculcating good study habits that will prepare them for college. We are told to be creative, and our requests for avant-garde materials are scratched from the budget.

So these are the problems. We'll solve some. We'll live with others. As our students are, we're doing. We're learning. And we like it.

So much for definitions, procedures, purposes, evaluations, and problems. For further information and for free materials, which will admit you to a classroom of the 70's, just clip this coupon. Fill in your name and address and mail to

Shirley and Margueritte
Sunnyside High School
1725 East Bilby Road
Tucson, Arizona 85706

Phones: 294-1411, extension 280

Name _____

Address of school_____ phone _____

I wish to visit your class_____ (when)_____

I wish you to visit my school_____ (when)_____

I want the following items:

____ 1. Student Evaluation Form

____ 2. Supervisor's Evaluation Form

____ 3. Letter to Parents (explaining the course and requesting permission for their child to take the class)

____ 4. List of activities for skills development

____ 5. Considerations in making a lesson plan

____ 6. A Model lesson plan

____ 7. A class news letter

____ 8. Lesson plan ideas

____ 9. A model for observation and evaluation

____10. A sample of Summary of an article read during library day

____11. A sample of a Final Exam

____12. A partial bibliography of materials used for the class

____13. A list of what activities our students participated in while out in the community.

GAMEMAKING IN THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

Vicki Hackett, Concord, California

There is much talk these days about revitalizing curriculum, making it relevant, and enabling students to have fun learning experiences. In my search for new materials I discovered several stimulating study kits, films, and books; I found few games or experience-oriented kits which directly involved the students as more than an audience.

I was hearing hints all around me--"Why don't we have games in Englisn like we have in Social Studies?" (These kids had played STAR POWER,GENERATION GAP, NATO, and other simulation games in their social studies classes.) True, in my classroom we had used such published materials as TUMBLEWORDS, SHUFFLEBOOK, CHARACTERS FROM DICKENS' NOVELS, ESP TEST KIT and others; but the students and I felt that there must be more games available in the language arts area.

Since I was participating in a series of media workshops at the time, I had been exposed to many stimulating ways of creating and integrating media into the curriculum. One elementary teacher particularly inspired me with the clever games she had developed for her students. I had been giving considerable thought to the emphasis that many games place on competition; in her games the experience of participating outweighed the spirit of competition. I decided that the time was right. With the students' interest and my enthusiasm and new ideas,these games we wanted were going to be created in our own classroom. I didn't even consider making the games myself for two reasons: 1.) Making them by myself would have been too time consuming and wouldn't have been much fun. 2.) This game creating process would be a good learning experience for the kids--and most definitely relevant since they were interested in the end result if they hadn't yet considered the process.

Something very exciting happened in my classroom during this game making project, something that every teacher hopes for and attempts to stimulate in a variety of clever ways. While the students who enjoy learning and like school were involved in creating their games, those kids who hate school and particularly detest English began to get into the game making project too.

The procedures I am going to explain were followed with seventh graders in a language arts class. Modify them to suit your designated grade level and subject area. I had a real advantage because this project was conceived jointly by the students and me. The first step, then, is to serve as a catalyst and allow the idea to make games come from your students.

INTRODUCTION

Somehow making games during class that were to be played also during class didn't seem to be too much like work, and I didn't have to struggle to capture student interest. After writing 'language arts' on the board, I asked the kids what topics they felt those two words, our class subject area, were meant to cover. The list included, after a few necessary leading questions from me:

Literature (books, poems, songs)
Spelling
Language
Thinking and creating
Talking and acting
Listening

We then discussed in detail the types of games we had played before, game strategies, specific techniques employed by games. Many students wanted to dig through bedroom closets and boxes in garages and to consult the games themselves; so this discussion carried over into a second day. Rules, we noticed together, were extremely important. Games without rules or explanations might never be played. I didn't realize then how prophetic that discovery was to become.

PLANNING STAGE

The game makers then divided into small groups of four to seven kids.* The group then decided on the general area of concentration and on the specific focus of their game. If a group selected a book as a focus, each member had to read the book before beginning the game. Because of this stipulation, some groups formed around book titles the students had already read and liked. The group next decided on the type of game to be produced--board game, card game, simulation game, creative game, etc. The members then attempted to list all the work that had to be done and to divide the labor among group members. The PLANNING STAGE is extremely important to the game makers. I wanted them to be successful and I felt their chances would be greater if they thought out each step in the creation process. I required that all writing of rules, cards, and board instructions be done first on scrap paper and be checked carefully for correct spelling and for clarity by other group members. I also required that a sketch of the game board (not in great detail) be shared with the whole group and me before the painting began. I suggested that rule writers ask others to read their rules and check for directness, clarity, and sufficient information; this suggestion proved to be the most valuable. And it was the most sneaky lesson on expository writing I have ever come up with!

PRODUCTION STAGE

If the previous stage sound noisy and confusing to you, just wait until the second week. From various sources the kids and I rounded up the following materials: cardboard, masonite, or another surface for game boards; cigar boxes; water-based paints such as acrylics, house paints; felt pens; spools, toothpaste and other small caps for game markers; shellac, plastic spray; clear contact paper or lamenating materials; contact paper to cover boxes; other basics such as scissors, paste, etc. This week can discourage you from ever attempting a creative project again unless you establish storage areas and procedures, clean-up regulations, and a code of acceptable student behavior. The students helped to establish these criteria; the also helped enforce their regulations. At the end of the second week the teacher needs a nice, relaxing weekend.

EVALUATION STAGE

During the third week the groups had an opportunity to try each others' games. The class and I formed an evaluation sheet; major topics for evaluation were:

*This project could be a total disaster if the students have had no small group experience. A good booklet for beginning small group work is LEARNING DISCUSSION SKILLS THROUGH GAMES. Gene and Barbara Stanford. Citation Press. 1969. For a more thorough explication and activity guide for group work see A STUDENT CENTERED LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM: K-12. James Moffett.

Appearance of game components
  a. neatness
  b. creativity
All writing in (on) game
  a. neatness
  b. correctness of spelling
Rules of game
  a. clarity
  b. thoroughness
Interest level of game
Special feature (s) of game
Suggestions to improve game

During two class periods the groups moved around to try different games. Fifteen minutes were devoted to the playing and evaluating of each game. Chaos reigned in certain corners of the room as groups could not decide whose turn was next, how to take a short cut, whether or not to reshuffle cards, whether you had to land exactly on FINISH or not, etc. Rules were causing a major problem, and I silently urged myself to let them decide exactly which feature of the game was creating this confusion. The evaluation sheets were collected and filed away for the next day. The third day the game makers were presented with the evaluations of their games. Rules were highly criticized and certain groups had made specific suggestions concerning improvement of rules. They then decided whether to make corrections, additions, suggested imrpovements or to let the game remain as it was. The date was set for final presentation of the games to the class, and two days later the games came in. The second evaluation was much more successful for most of the games, and the kids were anxious to share the games with friends and family.

As the project drew to a close, I knew that the communication and sharing of ideas, the critical thinking and evaluation of ideas that occurred during the project justified the noise, the chaos, and the extra expenditure of energy. The game cabinet in our classroom is no longer sufficient, but such problems I can live with!

OUTGROWTHS

The games are played during free time, library time, lunch time, class time, etc. The librarian has borrowed them to stimulate reading, and students have checked out games to go home overnight. Other classes and teachers have borrowed our games and have shared their ideas with us. We've had to designate a special drawer for spare toothpaste tops, dice, and rubber bands, since parts are continually if only momentarily missing. Book circulation has increased on the books that were selected as focal points for games. The classroom is a little more crowded these days, and the noise level seems to be higher. But both the teacher and the students are having more fun.

SOME NEW QUESTIONS AND SOME OLD ANSWERS ABOUT THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM

HOW GOOD IS THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH?

"English is probably both the least-taught and the worst-taught subject in the whole educational field. It is bad in the grade schools, worse in the high schools, worst in the college, while the university reaps the full benefit of this evil crescendo. The 'English' of the modern curriculum varies from a silly combination of 'Mother Goose' and the jargon of science or the shibboleths of religion to a disingenuous synthesis of antique philology and emasculated literature. No wonder some of the men and women who speak and write their language well would extend to prose the judgment passed upon poetry: English untaught is taught best. A teacher of English is so often a spoiler of English."

(Alexander F. Chamberlain, "The Teaching of English," PEDAGOGICAL SEMINARY, June 1902, p. 161)

WHAT SHOULD BE THE CONTENT OF THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM?

"Typically we English teachers have scant respect for the literary and language activities and standards of life. I shall not argue the case here, tho I must record my own conviction that in the long warfare between the practises of life and the principles of the school, the former have been more frequently on the side of sanity and effectiveness. But it is not primarily a question of whether we respect the out-of-school, English activities and principles. Whether we respect them or not, they probably have a deal more influence upon children than we in school can ever attain. If we ignore or align ourselves against the movies and talkies, the radio, the newspaper and magazine, the popular song, the current books advertised and displayed everywhere, against the effective colloquial language of everyday life, we are rendered almost impotent.

The moment we 'accept the universe,' accept the English interests and tendencies, the activities and practises of the children outside the school as on the whole salutary and right, and conceive it our function to parallel, to enrich and supplement, to guide, to make significant and educative, to bring about more discernment and discrimination, to lift to a higher standard--that moment we place ourselves in a 'coign of vantage,' in a position that is tenable and strategic. Then, and only then, may we hope to produce in and around the school the natural incentives and the lifelike opportunities for practising and learning the arts of English. It seems to me dead certain that only by dealing with present out-of-school realities shall we succeed in making our school enterprises stimulating and educative, for only so shall we succeed in persuading the 'whole child' to go to school to us."

(Walter Barnes, "English in Life and in School," PROCEEDINGS OF THE 71st ANNUAL MEETING, Washington, D.C.: NEA, 1933, pp. 33-34)

"The schools might well devote more attention to a number of the language activities which according to the returns are widely used by persons of the many callings and social groups reporting, and which are reported as giving much difficulty. These activities in particular are: Interviews; word of mouth inquiries; reports to a superior; instructions for subordinates; conferences. Conversation: with casual acquaintances; at social gatherings; over the telephone. Public Speaking: informal discussion; preparing addresses. Writing: informal notes and memos for one's self; formal notes of invitation, introduction, etc. Reading: legal documents. Listening: to an interview, a conference, or a public meeting."

(John Mantle Clapp, ed., THE PLACE OF ENGLISH IN AMERICAN LIFE: REPORT OF AN INVESTIGATION BY A COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, Chicago: NCTE, 1926, p. 46)

"The gravest defect in the present course of English as prescribed by the universities and colleges is its total inadequacy to meet present conditions and needs. It fails not only to satisfy the interests and desires of the pupils themselves, but to do its part as it should toward developing them into the type of men and women which our civilization demands and for which our public schools are established and supported.

The main impression made on one who studies the schools of our country today is that of the tremendous complexity of our educational problems, due largely to the lack of homogeneity in our population. This is especially true of our great cities. America has been well called the great 'mixing bowl,' in which all nationalities at varying stages of growth are demanding a place. Education is no longer the comparatively simple process of a few generations ago, when the same kind of training sufficed for all.

(Emma J. Breck, "A New Task For the English Teacher," THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, February 1912, p. 65)

WHAT INFLUENCES THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM?

"Certain influences are at work in public education today which indirectly affect to a considerable degree the problems of teaching English. One is the program of financial retrenchment and the three R's for national defense. Another is the current organized attack upon the left wing of progressive education by a group of men who disapprove of its social, economic, and educational views and are at the same time committed to a program of reduction of costs in the public schools. Still another is the effort on the part of certain leaders in education to reduce the time and recognition given to English in the schools because of their conviction that, as it is now taught in many places, it makes little contribution to the fundamental objectives of secondary education today. A fourth is the lively dispute in progress throughout the country over a return to the old emphasis upon mental discipline through a program of the critical and analytical reading of the 'great books.'"

(Dora V. Smith, "Today's Challenge to Teachers of English," THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, February 1941, p. 89)

WHAT ABOUT THE INFLUENCE OF THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE COMMUNITY ON THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM?

"An obstacle very frequently mentioned by teachers who claim they would like to invigorate their courses is the repressive attitude of administrators or of the community. With regard to this it may be said that just as frequently administrators complain that, while they would like to see the school and the English department break through its traditional crust, the teachers are unwilling to step out from their conventional, habitual, and, therefore, easier patterns. Talks with parents seem to show that their objections to change are due to a misconception of what the change is for and how it works. When understanding is brought about, many of them have said: 'I wish I could have had this kind of work when I was in school.' Parents want the best for their children. When they are convinced that real thinking has gone into a change in the program and that it is in line with recent knowledge of child psychology, they are very reasonable and quite happy.

There is one problem in this connection which will never be well met until schools have convinced their patrons that education does require professional training and information. I am now referring to the fact that real development and change in students cannot take place in a predictable length of time any more than you can do up learning into samall bundles and cram it down willing and unwilling throats. The great and significant developments in human beings depend on so many factors that no thoughtful teacher claims either infallible methods or that he can get results in a given time."

(H.H. Giles, "English in the Eight-Year Study," THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, February 1941, pp. 121-122)

WHAT ABOUT EVALUATION IN THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM?

"There is one thing more wrong with us English teachers. Few of us have been trained to seek continuously for evaluation of what we do. We are barely conscious, many of us, of the need to judge our teaching. We are not clear about the process of judgment, the first step in which is to set up objectives, aims, goals, and purposes that we want to achieve for ourselves and our students by means of our teaching. In the past we have set up such objectives and goals in terms of vague abstractions. We have said we want students to 'have knowledge' of grammar of literature. We said we wanted them to 'appreciate.' We wanted them to do 'decent' writing. I suppose that each of us in making these generalizations, whether we would be willing to admit it or not, had in mind some concrete and specific outcomes that we desired. But usually these were set in terms of how we write or appreciate, or how some other expert writes or appreciates, and not in terms of what is achievable, possible, wise, and satisfying for each of our students. We shall have to learn in years to come, through many a windy conference together, to do much thrashing about and soul-searching, much writing, and much talking, to set our goals cleanly, realistically, achievably, and concretely.

The next step in any evaluation is the selection of processes whereby we assume these goals may be achieved. This step demands that we maintain an attitude of experimentation, a willingness to try methods not often considered pedagogically respectable. Because of our training, the experimental attitude is largely alien to the English teacher's mind, but in future it must be sought and held at all costs."

(Malcolm S. MacLean, "What's Wrong With Us English Teachers," THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, October 1939, pp. 661-662)

WHAT OF THE NEW EMPHASIS ON CAREER EDUCATION?

"Finally, general education is concerned with vocational guidance and exploration, by means of which boys and girls may achieve some sort of objective notion of the kind of work for which they are adapted and the nature of the opportunities open to them. The plight of youth today is a comparatively sad one. . .

Opportunities for exploration of the world's work through courses in reading, speech, and writing are unlimited. Information--much of it free--is available for the boy or girl eager to secure and make use of it. Such materials furnish an excellent basis for the practice of skills in language and reading, at the same time affording well-motivated training in discussion and the presentation of ideas to others. The present popularity of juvenile series for girls--like SUE BARTON: STUDENT NURSE, PENNY MARSH: PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE, or PEGGY COVERS WASHINGTON--shows the eagerness with which vocational materials infused with human interest and personality are read by young people. For more mature readers biography is an unfailing source of inspiration and information, and the recognition of it in English courses in general education is heartening."

(Dora V. Smith, "General Education and the Teaching of English," THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, November 1940, pp716-717)

WHAT IS THE NEW ENGLISH TEACHER IN THE NEW ENGLISH CURRICULUM?

"I do not mean that the new kind of teacher cares less for learning than the old. Let us be very clear upon that point. But he cares for it in a different way. He does not value fact-storing in itself; but he values exceedingly principles, ways of thinking and of attacking a problem, appreciations, and potential activities of every sort, based upon the wisest things that men have thought and felt and done in the past. He is trying to teach young people to think forward and, having thought, to act. Facts about past human achievement are foundational; they are the concrete illustrations of principles which have been at work; but apart form principles they have no

value to the modern teacher. I think, in truth, that the new teacher needs to know more than the old; for, simply because he invites his pupils to think, he subjects his own scholarship to question and attack; it must be able to stand disorganization, strain from an enexpected direction, and entirely unlooked-for demands. For there is in the modern school no such thing as brute authority, clubbing the insistent questioner into silence; there is no such thing as the absolute limitation of a lesson to the eight or ten pages which the teacher has studied just before the class hour. I do not speak for a new, ignorant teacher. I think that the new teacher of English must know more about literature, more about the fundamental aspects of composition, which are now often quite obscured by the details, and infinitely more than did the old kind of teacher about English and comparative philology and the laws which underlie language and its effective use. For from now on, I think, we must increasingly assume that many of the pupils who come to us will have no linguistic training except what we English teachers give."

(Charles S. Pendleton, "The New Teacher of English," THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, November 1917, p,577)

"What are the qualifications of this new teacher? First of all she has faith in the ability of each of her pupils to contribute in some measure to the democratic life in her classroom. She has respect for individuality and for the differences between individuals. She senses, somehow, the fact that each individual has within himself some contribution to his own welfare and to that of society, and she resolves to make her classroom a place where that individuality will have an opportunity for creative expression. The form, the content, the manner of the expression--these things she does not attempt to prescribe.

The teacher also has faith in the ability of a group of children in a school to become increasingly self-directive. She conceives of her own position in the classroom as that of expert, guide, and adviser rather than as that of taskmaster. She has her own thoughts and reactions, but she is not interested primarily in handing them over to her pupils. On the contrary, she is convinced that whetever conclusions her class reaches as the result of intelligent thinking will benefit it much more than any ready-made ideals she might supply.

She is willing and anxious for her pupils to subject to the scrutiny of intelligent thinking any conventions or customs that come within their experience. She does not consider it impudent for them to look questioningly at institutions that have become hallowed by centuries of use. Rather, it is right and normal for institutions to be subjected to criticism, and even for them to change.

For the material--the curriculum--of this course, the teacher leads her pupils to sense and study problems within their own experience. She is convinced that such problems do exist, though she may not know in advance what they are. She is concerned that the problems on which her students work shall be real and that there be a desire on the part of the pupils for their solution. In other words, as a problem is important to her pupils, it must in like degree be important to her. She continually scrutinizes the work her children engage in to test for interest and drive, fearing that she may inadvertently have superimposed on their conceptions her own conceptions of what they should be doing."

(Robert W. Rounds, "The English Teacher Looks Ahead," THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, February 1939, pp. 111-11.)

WHAT IS THE STUDENT LIKE TODAY AND WHAT WOULD HE LIKE TO READ AND WHAT DOES HE WANT FROM THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM?

"The high-school student today is also seeking some assurance that life--not just his own but human life--is valuable and has a future worth struggling to make better. I find many high-school students who feel that civilization is at an end; that futility and terror alone are their lot; that theirs is a hopelessly doomed generation, unlike any which has lived before. In sight into other ages when men have faced tragedy helps give them a sense of possible victory, a feeling that they are a part of a stream of life. The lives of characters who have struggled, suffered, and still found life good are invaluable. . .

A part of this demand for security is undoubtedly related to a need for religion--not orthodox religion but faith in the values which do not show in factories or palaces or on an accountant's sheet--in wisdom which goes beyond ability to solve mathematical formulas, analyze statistics, or classify fossils. Fearing controversial issues we have offered but meager emotional satisfactions through the reading of books dealing freely with such questions. I am not advocating a return to the sentimentality of THE IDYLLS or SIR LAUNFAL but an honest dealing with ideals, human fears, and hopes.

Finally, and perhaps as never before, our students need to learn from literature to understand their own world, the world of this America. I do not mean merely that they must learn about economics, social systems, socialized medicine, old age security, and insurance. These are important. So also are learning what the terrors of war can do to a man or woman, what kind of a world we must expect when the tense, horror-stricken millions again rest from fear; what men and women reared to believe in the right of might may do when they find themselves mistaken. All these are important. Social studies teachers are doing good work here, but they cannot do it all. But the especial responsiblity of teachers of English seems to me to open to our students as many avenues as possible through which they will, first of all, understand the daily lives, the difficulties, the emotions, and the ambitions, the human qualities of their neighbors in America. This is the peculiar power of literature, and this, I believe, must come first. Consequently, I maintain, as I have repeatedly before, that as teachers of English we must see to it that our pupils meet that American literature which enables North to understand South; poor, rich; white, black; factory worker, the toiler in the cotton field; Catholic, Jew, and Gentile, one another and the man who claims no faith as well. These understandings must be among our first aims.

All the foregoing will come only at the loss of much which some of us have enjoyed and which we can validate as good. I enjoyed LORNA DOONE. I am not sure my students can afford it. They are perplexed by problems which did not trouble my adolescence, and this day is not one for trifling with young minds."

(Lou LaBrant, "English in the American Scene," ENGLISH JOURNAL, March 1941, pp. 207-208)

THE BLACK IDIOM: WHAT THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM BEES NEEDIN--
THINK ABOUT IT, THINK ABOUT IT.....

Geneva Smitherman, Afro-American Studies Department, Harvard University

(Excerpted from a pre-publication version of THE BLACK IDIOM, forthcoming, 1973; copyright, 1973. Don L. Lee's "But He Was Cool or: He Even Stopped for Green Lights" from his book, DON'T CRY, SCREAM, Detroit: Broadside Press, 1969, is herewith printed by permission of the publishers.)

OUT: the English teacher's terribly out-dated "mania for correctness." IN: a radical, innovative "mania" for language power. What this bees meanin is: emphasis on specificity/supporting details, linguistic versatility, depth of content, and the like. What this do NOT mean is: if it conforms to the grammar of handbooks, but says nothing, it is okay. If you don't think these two thangs is different, try rappin to a kid whose paper is virtually worthless--because it says nothing, or is over-generalized--but whose mechanics, grammar, etc. are absolutely, sterilely correct. Ain nothin you can tell such a student, believe me, and I've dealt with such situations all the way from K-Grad. School. Now, this kind of thang bees goin down in English classrooms because of the English teacher's linguistic purism--that prevails and prevails and endures and endures ad absurdum et infinitum. Why? Well, mostly cause Americans is real hung up on race and social status, and English teachers maybe got this racial/class consciousness neurosis worse than others. Like, remember when you used to couldn't say It is me? Well, nowadays, don't nobody pay no attention to use of objective case after copula. But that's because middle-class (Black, but mostly white) Americans, the language pace-setters, bees employin this "incorrect" usage all the time. Whereas a popular Black English expression, like songstress Nina Simone's IT BEES THAT WAY does not enjoy mainstream linguistic legitimacy.

This traditional purism goes way back--as least as far as the Eighteenth Century and is connected to the elitism associated with Latin and the attendant denigration of the Anglo-Saxon tongue, the decline of the virtuous and high-minded Aristocracy and the simultaneous rise of the primitive and unscrupulous Middle Class, and all sorts of complex thangs like that, which Ken Donelson ain gon allow me time to go into here. Two examples will have to suffice. On the English side, Bishop Robert Lowth conceptualized his SHORT INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH GRAMMAR (1763) in terms of giving "order and permanence" to the "unruly, barbarous" tongue of the Anglo-Saxons. On the American side, Lindley Murray (who even railed against contractions!) wrote his ENGLISH GRAMMAR (1795) not simply to introduce the proper method of English usage among the young, but to "promote the cause of virtue as well as of learning" through "moral and religious" examples.

Now, there do be some ways out of this mess we English masters done got ourselves into. To wit: just like Black folks done led the way in innovations in American popular culture (music, dance, "slang," etc.) and to some extent in American life styles (current protest styles were borrowed from the Black Movement and the prevailing existentialist ethic from Black America's urban coping strategies)--okay, we might be willing to graciously lend our Black Expressive Style in the cause of American education--if you can dig it.

If students were to critically examine the Black Idiom and the rules for its continued functionality, they would find a dialect and style very much unlike that of Middle America's--one shot through with invariant be's, multiple negatives, zero-s morphemes, etc.--but one which works as a highly effective communicative dynamic. Such an extended curricular exercise would do much to dispel the fallacious assumption that "correct" usage is all, cause among Black folks, there's good rappers and there's bad rappers, and surface features of "polite" usage ain got nothin to do with it. One example will have to suffice.

In the Oral Tradition, which is the basis of the Black Cultural Sensibility, there is a verbal ritual called Signification. Because of its effectiveness and rootedness in Black Culture, both preachers and street-corner rappers use it. Briefly defined, Signification is a linguistic strategy, a rhetorical offensive which involves needling (signifyin on) one's audience to make an important point. It must conform to the following specifications: a) indirection; b) understatement; c) "teachy," but not "preachy"; d) metaphorical but concretely so --e.g., by illustrative example; e) humor--may be caustic, but it must be funny; f) elicit favorable response from audience--e.g., laughter, expressions of approval, giving of "fives" (i.e., palm slapping), etc. A poem by a dynamite, young Black poet, Don L. Lee, excellently exemplifies deployment of these rules.

In "But he was cool or: he even stopped for green lights," Lee uses the metaphor of a cool dude ironically (understatement) to castigate a self-styled Black "revolutionary," caught up in rhetoric and appearance; all talk and no action. "Super-cool" thinks he is "ultra-hip," yet he is doing nothing constructive to aid the cause of Black Liberation beyond "greeting u in Swahili, saying good-by in Yoruba, and wearing a double natural that wd. put the sisters to shame." I mean, like, can you dig a cat being so cool that he even stops for GREEN lights? Working subtly (indirectly) on any members of his audience whom this shoe fits (and I gots to concede, it do be fittin a whole lot of young, simplistic-minded Brothers), the poet teaches via concrete example (green vs. red lights; cool vs. hot cats) that to be Black is not to be calm, cool, and collected. To be Black is to be angrily aware of, heated, and moved by Black oppression. "To be Black is to be very-hot." At the same time that such Brothers (and Sisters too, no chauvinism intended here) gain insight into themselves and their unactions, they are not "fronted off" (exposed, embarrassed) since the overall effect of the poem is to allow the audience recourse to humor. This can be witnessed by the loud laughter, and responses like "Oh, man, this dude is bad," (i.e., good), etc. this poem always evokes when read to Black students.

By universal extension, the message of Lee's poem applies to any self-deluded individual who lives by illusion, masking, and appearance, rather than concrete, positive action. Thus, while this very poetic and political-minded Brother is signifyin on Black folk, we bees knowin there's plenty of white folks like that too.

Don L. Lee, "But He Was Cool or: He Even Stopped for Green Lights"

super-cool
ultrablack
a tan/purple
had a beautiful shade.

he had a double-natural
that wd put the sisters to shame.
his dashikis were tailor made
& his beads were imported sea shells
(from some blk/country i never head of)
he was triple-hip.

his tikis were hand carved
out of ivory
& came express from the motherland.
he would greet u in swahili
& say good-by in yoruba.
wooooooooooo-jim he bes so cool & ill tel li gent
cool-cool is so cool he was un-cooled by
other niggers' cool
cool-cool ultracool was bop-cool/ice box
cool so cool cold cool

his wine didn't have to be cooled, him was
air conditioned cool
cool-cool/real cool made me cool--now
ain't that cool
cool-cool so cool him nick-named refrig-
erator.

cool-cool so cool
he didn't know,
after detroit, newark, chicago &c.,
we had to hip
cool-cool/super-cool/real cool
that
to be black
is
to be
very-hot.

HIGH SCHOOL TEACHING REVISITED

Margaret Ackerman, University of Arizona

Probably most supervisors and teachers of methods courses have a desire to get back to the secondary classroom. They may feel that it would be a relief from their own problems and frustrations to take on someone else's for a change; they may wonder secretly (at least I did) if they can still cope with high school students; and most of them would like to be able to say with authority that something they recommend really works, instead of feeling that their students and the students' cooperating teachers are thinking pityingly, "She doesn't know what it's like in the real world."

During my sabbatical semester last fall I had the opportunity to experience high school teaching again. It was only one class for eight weeks, but it was in the real world.

I had requested the sabbatical to work on some teaching materials for secondary schools in aspects of language other than grammar and usage--things that could, and I think should be taught, but seldom are. So when Tom Dalrymple, chairman of the English Department at Sunnyside High School, called, said that one of his teachers would be out for about two months for major surgery, and asked if I would like to teach her elective class in language for that time, I realized that here was a chance to see if my theories and my materials were workable. I accepted.

The class was an elective entitled "What's Happening in Language," being offered for the first time. The students were juniors and seniors, most of whom had actually chosen it. There were others who were there obviously only because they had to be somewhere. However, their presence provided me with more of a cross-section, and, after all, isn't it the aim of every teacher to reach those who are not already interested?

My first two weeks were spent mostly getting to know the class and relearning how to be a high school teacher. It was a humbling experience. I am used to thinking of myself as a fairly successful teacher. I suppose I've been spoiled by having taught for the past few years mostly students who were already well-motivated. It was ego-shattering to feel that with all my experience, my degrees, and my background in the subject, I was doing no better than an average inexperienced student teacher. But probably such mortification is an antidote to arrogance, and everyone should have a dose of it from time to time.

By the third week I began to feel that the class and I were accustomed to each other. From then on things began to go better. About this time a couple of those students who had to be somewhere were put somewhere else or left school. I hope this was coincidence and not the direct effect of my being there. Still, it did make things more pleasant for the rest of us, and there were still enough reluctant students to provide plenty of challenge.

My overall goals for this mini-course were basically the same as those I have for university classes in the teaching of language, although the specific behavioral objectives were somewhat more limited. I wanted students to become aware of the many uses of language by people in society and how these reflect individuals and traditions. I wanted them to realize that language is fascinating and can be enjoyed and analyzed without learning a lot of technical labels. For this reason I taught no grammar as such.

I think I was moderately successful in achieving these goals. Although

this particular class was much more reserved than some I have seen, many of the students said on a questionnaire I gave out at the end that they had enjoyed most of the activities. It hadn't been all that apparent to me that they had, even though they had worked at them obediently.

The most conspicuous success of the course occurred by accident. One day I arrived at school to find that an assembly had been called which took all but seven students from my class. So I abandoned my lesson plan and told them they could do whatever they wished. Several of them found a Scrabble game in the cupboard and began playing--that was linguistic anyway. Meanwhile I started looking over some papers that had been handed in. One of them contained a somewhat obscene coinage that I hadn't heard before, so I asked the writer what it meant. (I believe strongly that instead of condemning such usages or merely labeling them taboo, we could profit by analyzing them as indicators of social dialect and colloquial style.) I then took out my DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN SLANG to check his definition. This book, along with others, had been in the classroom library ever since I arrived, but until then the students had obviously not realized that it contained some of their favorite dirty words. They spent the rest of the period happily looking up all they could think of. I was pleased. I don't know what the principal would have thought if he had happened to walk in.

Many of the students said the thing they liked best was a guest lecture by Fran Ferrance, a colleague of mine from the University. He gave a talk on logical fallacies. He had such straightforward and engaging method of presenting the subject and illustrated it with so many interesting examples that the students were completely attentive throughout. Some stayed to talk with him after class, and several asked if we could have him come again.

Another very successful activity took place on Election Day. I divided the class into groups and gave each the name of a comic strip character as a candidate for president. Each group was to compose one poster, two bumper stickers, and a speech for its candidate to give. To help with the speech, I had made a basic outline with lots of blanks to fill in and a list of political jargon words as suggestions. As the groups finished their posters and bumper stickers, I put them up on a large bulletin board. This seemed to inspire everybody, and some groups did extra ones. We weren't able to finish during the period, so we deferred the speeches till the next day. As I recall, Alfred E. Neuman was elected. The groups were able to come up with surprisingly good original slogans. I had noticed in earlier projects how creative some of them could be--usually not the so-called "best" students, either.

During the eight weeks, I had the students do a couple of dictionary projects, in which they looked up the etymologies of ten words on a subject of interest to them. I had previously prepared little lists, enough to go around and some extras, to allow plenty of choice. They responded well to this provision for individual differences.

Through the school and the University I had access to many good films, filmstrips, and recordings. All these went over quite well.

My biggest disappointment occurred when I assigned the students to do individual projects on language. I really don't know what I did wrong. I handed out a sheet of suggestions and a detailed description of procedures about three weeks before the due date. A week after that, I asked students to turn in a statement of what they had chosen to do. (All those who were present that day actually did, but quite a few who were absent never made it up.) I gave the

class parts of several periods to work on the projects in class or go to the library. In spite of all this preparation, only a little over half the class actually completed the assignment. Several of these students did excellent projects, and I think they learned a lot from doing them. But what about the others? I have no answer.

I started with history of the language, since the regular teacher had planned to do it at that time, but ideally I would not start with something that requires so much teacher presentation. I also spent about three days on names as an introduction, and although the students were interested and enjoyed much of it, I believe that also could have been deferred till later when we all knew each other and could have had more group participation. Beginning with dialect or slang would have given everybody a chance to contribute something and probably would have helped us get acquainted sooner.

An elective like this was, of course, ideal for what I was working on already, but I found that teaching this class strengthened some of the misgivings I already had about the elective system. I had no lack of material or ideas--I could have gone on and on--but I felt uneasy that literature and composition were being neglected. I believe that my objectives for teaching language could have been better fulfilled by a regular year course that integrated the major areas of study. Instead of my providing the students with little snippets of Chaucer, Shakespeare, and others to illustrate the history of the language, surely a disservice to these authors, we might have studied some of their works for language as well as plot, theme, and character. Or we could have composed essays on aspects of language found in literature and in life. Language awareness built up a little at a time is probably more effective than that presented in one large package.

I would recommend a classroom library of not only books but also magazines and newspapers. These are invaluable for exercises in rhetoric, semantics, style, even grammar. And students seem to respond well to the individual choices available in such materials. I would also recommend having a stock of word games handy for those who fininsh regular assignments early. I had made up or collected some palindromes, anagrams, crossword puzzles, and cryptograms, and found that students enjoyed trying to figure them out. It was a game, but it taught them some things about language that they might not have learned in any other way. One of the most important is that language study is not the dull subject they always thought. It's actually fun.

My experience at Sunnyside was especially pleasant because everyone was so cooperative. I felt I could ask anyone for help I needed in finding things and coping with red tape. And, as teachers do, I got so attached to the students that I hated to leave them.

Articulation of this kind is something more of us could profit from I know I got invaluable insights from it. Unfortunately, it is usually difficult to work out logistically. I hope, however, that we can go on from this beginning, and that others will try similar experiments in the future.

IMPLICATIONS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PRACTICE ON SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION IN HIGH SCHOOL

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Every man has the ability to think, but he is frequently not permitted the opportunity. Consider, for example, three obstacles to creative thinking in America's public schools: overcrowded classrooms, widespread differences among students, and the proliferation of subject matter. It is a small wonder that a "thinking reed" can be trampled in the hysterical rush for the diploma. One solution to the three obstacles to creative thinking is the creation of small groups within the classroom.

In this article, I will discuss how small group techniques, normally used in elementary school, may be used most effectively in high school, particularly in the field of English. The discussion will proceed in two directions: (1) determining the nature of small group work, (2) relating primary and elementary school grouping practices to potential high school instructional procedures.

The Nature of Small Group Work

Dorris M. Lee (1968), K.M. Evans (1966), and Kaye Barrington and Irving Rogers (1968) agree on the two basic components of a group: united effort and orientation toward a task.

Some high school teachers, envisioning small group process as chaos, even pandemonium, wonder what advantages small group work has over traditional classroom teaching. Actually, small-grouping procedures are beneficial to both teacher and student. Grouping is a way for the teacher to cluster common problems. Students can acquire needed skills not developed in regular classroom instruction. Thus, the student benefits by more particularized instruction and by the social context where thinking and interacting can exist.

Successful grouping procedures are difficult to achieve for five significant reasons.

First, there are many myths regarding small group work. R.V. Allen (1969) maintains that a group really cannot learn anything--only individuals within the group can learn. In addition, the teacher should not expect group success by merely binding together students of similar achievement and intelligence levels. Nor should he believe students have gained much by the group's ability to answer an endless number of questions.

Second, handling small groups requires teacher skill. Ned Flanders (1954) suggests nine teacher qualitites prerequisite to successful small group procedures, including alertness and readiness to share responsibility of selecting particular students to be in a group, sensitivity to pupil readiness for group work, and tolerance of noise and confusion.

Third, knowing how to form the group is, in a sense, the most difficult problem. By far the most effective method of grouping children is through the sociogram. To prepare a sociogram, the teacher asks each student to write on a small slip of paper (1) the name of the student with whom he would MOST like to work, and (2) the name of the student with whom he would LEAST like to work. These relationships are graphed in circles (students) connected by straight-lined arrows (most preferred) and broken-lined arrows (least preferred). To protect identities, numbers rather than names are plotted in the circles. The sociometric method assumes that children

who like each other will work together successfully. Group size is crucial. Barrington and Rogers (1968) recommend a minimum of three and a maximum of eight. With less than three, group process is impossible. With more than eight, it is improbable. Also crucial is the alternative group-project selection; all projects should be equally attractive. Oversubscription on one hand and universal unpopularity on the other upset balanced grouping.

Fourth, the concept of group leadership is complex. Evans (1966) sees the leadership role dependent upon (1) the source of the leader's authority and (2) the source of the task. He charts (p. 47) fifteen possible leadership situations. Barrington and Rogers (1968) more generally describe three types of leadership situations in group process: authoritarian leadership, democratic leadership, and laissez-faire leadership. Since many students lack the ability to lead a group, leadership skills can become an important part of the curriculum.

Fifth, students must know how to act in a group. In teaching group process to his high school students, David M. Litsey (1969) discusses eighteen roles a group member can assume--including (1) maintenance roles, such as expressing group feelings and setting standards; (2) task roles, such as information or opinion seeking and consensus taking; and (3) self-service roles, such as dominating and blocking.

Studies by Morton Deutsch (Barrington and Rogers, 1968) show that when the teacher offers one letter grade for the group project, atmosphere in the group is cooperative, the quality and quantity of work being higher than when the teacher offers to grade each member separately, a situation which often produces disruptive competition where self-serving roles would be more likely.

The Application of Elementary School Grouping Practices to High School

Small group work is as vital to grade twelve as it is to grade one. What will follow is a description of seven grouping practices in elementary schools and how these practices may serve as models for similar grouping in high school.

1. Reading Groups

Grouping for reading is the most commonly used grouping practice in elementary school. Usually, children are placed into one of three groups, depending upon their reading ability. In the situation where the teacher is without paraprofessional help, she works with one group while the other two groups might either be doing seat work or some sort of self-directed work at a learning center--listening to tapes or records, making a bulletin board display, or viewing a film loop. With paraprofessional help, more than one group may be, for example, reading aloud at the same time.

Even the high school English teacher in the carpetless classroom can, without paraprofessional assistance, group for reading by imaginative planning. Consider, for example, a hypothetical eleventh grade English class with a seven-year spread in reading ability and a tradition-bound literature anthology. If the teacher carefully devises a thematic unit, not all students would need to read the same material. A typical eleventh grade thematic unit is Man and Nature. During one period, high-ability readers could proceed at their own speed through a series of stories, perhaps a novel, related to the designated theme. Selections might include John Steinbeck's "Flight," Water Van Tillburg Clark's "Hook," and Wallace Stegner's "The Wolfer." Middle-ability readers could be discussing with the teacher the main points in Jack London's CALL OF THE WILD--or reading aloud from it. At the same time, low-ability readers, using headsets, could listen to a taped rendition of Zona Gale's "Bill." On succeeding days the teacher would vary the routine, working with different

groups as the need would arise.

2. Learning Centers

More intricate than any classroom set-up described under "Reading Groups" is the use of learning centers. R.V. Allen (1968) describes how an elementary school teacher can transform her room into a series of seven specialized small group centers, including (1) a book center for browsing, (2) a listening center, with record player, tape recorder, and headsets, and a game center. A conventional high school English classroom can easily be converted into learning centers by the imaginative use of such mundane props as portable bulletin boards, folding screens, small work tables, headsets. The purpose of each group--its special needs--determines the number and type of learning centers created.

3. Group Structure Models

So far, I have described reading groups and learning centers as examples of space manipulation within the classroom, with little specific reference to how these groups fit into the curriculum sequence. Harvard W. McLean (1967) presents five group structure models, defined in terms of their role in elementary school curriculum sequence: (1) the special group, (2) intermediate grouping, (3) total class grouping, (4) single-problem groups, and (5) single-problem cross-reporting groups. All of models are based on two dimensions of curriculum: (1) the problems to be covered and (2) the structures to be used in covering the problems. Commonly used in high school, model 1, the special group, can take the form of a panel discussion prepared by interested or high ability students, a skit, or an improvisation; it functions to give group participants special recognition and a sense of identity. The principal difference between model 2 and model 1 is the total class involvement in group work at one point in the curriculum, not for the purposes of enrichment but to allow the students to specialize in depth in one area of their interest. Each group's reporting permits the other groups to see how all group activities fit together. Model 2, applied to a high school literature class, could take the form of discussion clusters, each of which discusses one aspect of a piece of literature and then reports back to the rest of the class.

In model 3, total class grouping, all problems are treated in small group work, the constitution of the groups changing from problem to problem. Interval reporting helps the class to see the whole picture of how the unit is progressing. In high school English, this grouping technique is seldom attempted, except, perhaps, in some independent study situations. However, Moffett's (1968) language arts curriculum could adapt itself to model 3. Moffett views the English classroom as a series of small groups functioning in the various processes of reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Model 4 is similar to model 3 in that its emphasis is on total class grouping throughout the unit. However, model 4 differs in that each child works in extreme depth on only one problem and reports, not intermittently, but once at the end of the unit.

Model 4, applied to a high school English literature class, could take the form of various panels and dramatizations following the reading and discussion of, for example, MACBETH.

Model 5 is identical to model 4, except for intermittent progress reports.

4. Grouping Through Sub-Theme

Vincent R. Rogers (1969), working at Michael Faraday Junior School--a slum school--in Southwark, London, acquired intense emotional involvement with nine and ten year old students when he taught the theme of violence as a social studies concept. In pursuing the theme he divided the class into four special interest groups: (1) An ideal home in an ideal city, (2) My mother and my father, (3) Fear, and (4) Murderers and their victims. Student activity took the form of creative writing, discussions, community visits, and role-playing. Fortunately, each small group had a teacher-leader to give professional assistance to these poignant activities.

In high school English, the literary theme, alienation, could be subdivided into (1) ethnic alienation, (2) social alienation, (3) political alienation, and (4) personal alienation. Each of four small student groups could (a) select its own sub-theme and (b) work from a separate syllabus of reading and activities.

5. Cross-Age Groups

A growing practice in elementary schools is to have older students work with younger students as tutors, helpers, scribes. The younger students get more individual attention; the older students get satisfaction and reinforcement in their own school work. Janice James Robbins and Virginia Smith Hallock (1965) describe how sixth-grade Mexican-American students help first-grade Mexican-American students overcome the language barrier at Sahuarita School near Tucson. The authors list thirteen different ways the older children helped, including these: first-graders dictated language experience stories to sixth-graders, the older students showed filmstrips to the younger ones, they helped the younger students in the library, and they operated tape recorders while younger students read aloud. The prime advantage of these sixth-grade teachers was, of course, their bilingualism. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of this type of program is not confined to bilingual problems.

Senior high school English students can be successfully employed as aides in classes of reluctant and disadvantaged students. Many times the generation gap between teacher and student is narrowed when another student serves as intermediary. Aides function as individual tutors, group leaders, and, on some occasions, teachers. Aides correct papers--although they do not evaluate compositions; they do, however, assist students while they are composing.

6. Nongraded Grouping

Elsie Selman (1968) describes her experiences at Taylor Elementary School which is completely nongraded. Students move at will from one activity group to another. For example, in one class she finds three or four groups working completely on their own. The situation, she feels, fosters creativity.

High schools with flexible scheduling, could make effective use of this type of nongraded grouping. High schools on traditional schedules would find this type of activity difficult to facilitate.

7. Grouping with Student "Teachers"

Helen Walters (1965) believes in letting her brightest students teach the rest of the class in small group situations. She arranged the chairs into small U-shaped groups. The student leaders--all accepted by the rest of the students--reported frequently on progress within the groups.

On the high school level, this type of group activity can take the form of

team learning. In team learning, the teacher spends the first month or so compiling information on each of his students: achievement, abilities, interests, attendance record, attitudes toward other students. On the basis of this information, the teacher constructs five or six teams that will compete against one another for a "prize", by accumulating points based on their achievement in group projects. Each team is carefully structured to include (1) a strong leader paired with (2) an extremely weak student; (3) a strong co-leader paired with (4) a rather weak student; (5) two or three average students. Weak students are inspired by their close association with strong leaders. Strong leaders learn to understand those of different interests and abilities.

In conclusion, high schools have not experimented enough with small grouping practices. Such experimentation, surprisingly enough, does not require great expense as much as it requires determination on the teacher's part to individualize instruction so that the "thinking reeds" are allowed to grow.

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"PROVE IT!" "I CAN'T"

Coleen Goodwin, Phoenix Union High School System

Suppose a parent should ask you, "Sally has taken four years of English in high school. Show me what she has learned in this time." Would you be able to comply? I can't, yet.

If someone were to ask you about what a student has learned in your class, whether it be a mini-course or a semester elective or a two semester course, could you give him an answer using "hard" data? Relatively few English teachers can. You can tell that person about the goals and objectives of the course, as well as about the methods and materials used, but can you prove that Sally or any other student LEARNED anything? Do you know how much each student already knew about the subject before he started? Can you show growth or gain or regression "objectively"?

For three years the Central High School English Department tried various methods of evaluation in order to be able to prove "objectively" how much the students learned in the elective courses. When we first started, we knew we had valid instruments and methods of evaluating our English courses. Today we know we didn't.

The first year we had English electives (1969-70, seniors only), we evaluated four courses: Communication and Mass Media, Senior Composition, World Literature, and Semantics and Logic. An attitude survey was constructed for each course by the teachers with guidance of the district research director. Many questions were the same, others were about the subject being evaluated. For Senior Composition, we used a pre and post standardized test, the Cooperative English Mechanics Test and the Cooperative Effectiveness of Expression. The Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Test was used in Semantics and Logic.

The results? The attitude survey disclosed a very positive reaction by the students to the elective program but the standardized tests showed no measurable difference. NO MEASURABLE DIFFERENCE! The teachers knew the students had learned something, yet the tests said "no measurable difference." Little did we know THEN that standardized tests in English are not built to measure short term gain and DO NOT test the content of any particular course.

During the 1970-71 school year (expansion of electives, sophomores, juniors, and seniors) we decided to check our progress using a sister school still on the traditional program as a control. We modified the attitude survey (made one instrument out of the four), used the Davis Reading test, used writing samples, and made up a language concepts test borrowing some of the items from Postman. The results? The students at Central High School had a more positive attitude toward English but in the skill areas no significant difference was shown. (Same results were shown both in Scarsdale, New York, and Trenton, Michigan.) Surely the students were LEARNING SOMETHING besides how to sleep sitting up with their eyes wide open.

Next step: compare the 1971-72 juniors ITED scores against their freshman scores in the areas of vocabulary and English expression. It took a special administration of the Iowa Test of Educational Development to do this since the junior administration of the test had been dropped two years previously. Interestingly enough, the students showed a drop in the two areas tested. Ironically, two years earlier, in order to "prove" to my principal that "C" (low track) English classes were not effective, I had used a comparison of freshmen and junior ITED scores on the seniors in the English 8C class. The comparison showed a loss.

Little did I know that most students, whether A or B or C showed a loss. Using

the data available from 1965-66 to 1971-72, an ITED comparison was undertaken on those students who had been at Central High School for all four years of high school. Every class showed a loss in English Expression on the ITED. Are we really not eaching anything in English?

A further check on the 1971-72 juniors was undertaken. On file in the English office we had a card on each student showing the elective courses take. The cards of the juniors we had freshman and junior ITED scores on were divided into three groups: those which indicated a gain, those indicating no gain, and those which showed a loss. Each course each junior had taken was tabulated under the appropriate column. One of our original hypotheses was that those students who had taken the grammar test would surely do better on the test than the others. Wrong again! The figures showed that it made no difference as to what course a student took as to his achievement on the ITED. (Interesting note: The Eight Year Study in 1942 found that "success in college of liberal arts does not depend upon the study of certain subjects for a certain period in high school.)

Since counselors have used the ACT results as a yardstick by which to judge the English program, we decided to check that out. (By the way, DO NOT use the ACT to evaluate your English program. The test was not constructed for that purpose. It is a predictive instrument only.) A comparison of the ACT scores of the 1969 to 1972 seniors who had been at Central High School all four years indicated a loss of one point with an increase in standard deviation. In 1969 the ACT mean was 21.3 for those students who had been at Central all four years as contrasted to 20.7 for the 1969 graduating class as a whole. In 1972 the four-year group had a 20.3 mean as compared to the total graduating group's mean of 19.3. Our skewed-to-the-right curve was flattening. (One very important thing to remember is that not every graduating senior takes the ACT examination. Many of our better students took, instead of the ACT, the SAT.)

So what did we learn in three years of trial and error? Primarily that our standardized measurement instruments do not measure what we expect them to measure. As John Mellon points out,

> Standardized tests have never been able to give an absolute measure of error freedom, not only because they don't look at actual writing but because they are made "difficult" enough at every age level to produce a normal distribution of results for the students of that age. Thus a tenth grader who writes virtually error-free prose, for example, may find himself no higher than the 70th or 80th percentile on a standardized test of writing skills. In other words, existing tests tell only how good students are, compared to other same-age students, at sniffing out errors in test-makers' sentences. And the mathematics of it all absolutely fordestines some kids to be winners, others losers.

What do we plan to do about it? Build our own test instruments! This is easier said than done. It takes time, it takes knowledge of performance objectives, it takes knowledge of the subject matter, besides taking knowledge of the subject matter, besides taking knowledge of testing principles.

We aren't the first department to come to this decision and we won't be the last. English Departments all over the nation are finding out that the instruments currently available commercially do not test what is being taught in the modern English classroom. National Council of Teachers of English in November 1971 drafted the following resolution:

> Standardized tests of achievement in English and reading have been subjects of growing controversy. Some test norms were established long ago or were based on populations that do not resemble the population being tested. The contents of many tests, moreover,

are widely regarded as culturally biased or pertinent to outdated curricula. Moreover, many students who fail to demonstrate reading competency on standardized tests can and do read materials of interest to them.

Clearly other measures than standardized tests are needed to evaluate achievement in language arts skills. These include locally prepared tests of language arts skills, surveys of students' reading habits, and evaluations by teachers who work daily with students. Be it therefore

Resolved, That the National Council of Teachers of English urge local school districts, colleges, and state agencies

(1) to re-examine standardized tests of English and reading in order to determine the appropriateness of their content to actual instructional goals and the appropriateness of the test norms to students;
(2) to study problems in the use and interpretation of these tests; and
(3) to consider carefully means other than standardized tests, including self-evaluation, of assessing the language arts skills of students.

This was even noted as far back as 1942 when Aiken reported that as the schools developed new content and types of curriculum organization that available instruments were not enough and that new instruments and a more comprehensive program of appraisal were needed. The thirty schools in this study took the position that evaluation was important only in relation to purpose. The avered that unless objectives are clearly defined, there can be no significant measurement of results.

Yet, it wasn't until the early 1960's that the concepts of test construction and evaluation started changing. The objective examination came under heavy criticism (Hoffman, Black, Goslin). Robert Stake in 1967 stated,

> none of the publications cited. . ./ASCD, AASA, NSBA, NASSP to mention a few/ strongly encourages the belief that curriculum evaluation can be accomplished by currently available tests, checklists, and visitation routines. (Robert E. Stake, "Evaluation of Education Programs," in Ralph Tyler, et al, eds., PERSPECTIVES OF CURRICULUM EVALUATION, p. 11)

In 1967, Fred Wilhelms outlined five tasks of evaluation:

(1) to facilitate self-evaluation,
(2) to encompass all the objectives,
(3) to facilitate teaching and learning,
(4) to generate records appropriate to various uses,
(5) to facilitate decision making on curriculum development and educational policy.

(Fred T. Wilhelms, "Evaluation as Feedback," in ASCD's EVALUATION AS FEEDBACK AND GUIDE, pp. 4-7)

Forehand agreed with Wilhelms and Diederich's five tasks and went one step further. He cautioned that evaluation is an ongoing activity that must be planned for a specific situation since "different combinations of agent, time, and purpose constitute different kinds of evaluation, calling for different goals, decision rules, measuring instruments and methods of analysis."

When IPI (Individually Prescribed Instruction) was developing its program, it found that since the students' scores on standardized tests did not provide any information as to the extent to which the program achieved its goals, it had to make its own.

The criterion-referenced measure (measurement of student achievement according to specified objectives) is being discussed in the literature and at conferences. Those in the know say this is the way to go. Stephen P. Klein (UCLA) maintains that both standardized and criterion-referenced tests are needed. This is the route the Central High School English Department has decided to travel. How long it will take us, we don't know. Our plans involve diagnostic, formative (evaluation which gives feedback to both students and teacher on student progress through a course), and summative (evaluation at the end of a unit, semester, or course) types of evaluation on both the overall program and individual courses. We hope to be able to know only what an entering freshman's strengths and weaknesses are in the language arts, but show how much he learns in three years of English. Teachers should be able to satisfy a parents request for "hard" data on what Sally has learned in a particular course.

Teacher workshops will be necessary, objectives will have to be reevaluated and assessed as to how they can be measured effectively, and the computer utilized in both test construction and recording keeping. A criterion-referenced test has been constructed for our Semantics and Logic course. Next we are going to tackle writing and literature.

One test will not give us all the information we'll want. Various types of evaluative instruments will have to be constructed and utilized. We recognize that the entire program will have to be carefully planned in order to avoid testing students to death and yet gather data in both the cognitive and affective areas. Many decisions will have to be made and our position as we go along reevaluated quite often.

In the future, when a parent asks, "Sally has taken four years of English in high school. Show me what she has learned in this time.", we plan to have a comparative profile to show. When the challenge "Prove it!" is hurled, hopefully the response will be "I can!"

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"IF I HAD ONE WISH FOR SOMETHING NEW, REALLY NEW, IN THE ENGLISH CURRICULUM, THIS IS WHAT IT WOULD BE"--A SYMPOSIUM

During January, the editor wrote a number of English teachers across the country asking them to contribute a paragraph or two around the theme, "If I Had One Wish for Something New, Really New, in the English Curriculum, This Is What It Would Be." The authors were asked to include or exclude anything they wanted, and "New" was meant to be ambiguous and provocative. While a number of the writers questioned what was even possibly "New" in the English curriculum or in education generally, twenty Englis teachers responded (and a number of former friends decided to ignore the editor). Below are the responses.

"My Dream. . .

And it came to pass that in the year of our Lord Nineteen Hundred and Seventy-Three there appeared a messenger to the magistrate of the Office of Education.

I bring you greetings and glad tidings from the ruler of the people. Peace has spread across our land and the coffers are overflowing.

Our ruler has decreed that the language of this land be brought to those who have suffered denial of the written word.

Henceforth, from this day foreward, you are charged with the responsibility of seeking out those who lack books, magazines, pamphlets, and other forms of the word of this land and do all in your power to dispense said materials.

It is the desire of the ruler that the young of our land, yea, especially those who are yet with their fathers and mothers, be read to, talked with, shared with, and left in the midst of books to ponder and enjoy the language in all forms: phantasy Mother Goose, poetry, rhyme, rhythm, drama and language play.

Marshall the forces of learned societies, institutions, teachers, the educated young, and the old to accomplish these deeds.

For those who are struggling with the language in their learning, exercise continued patience and efforts to satisfy them.

Books are to be placed in the hands of the young who have naught. Upon searching, we shall find them in the laps of their elders. No one shall want for these matters and experiences.

Yea, and unto those who oppose the decree, treat them kindly and with compassion. Count them among your numbers. For these, too, the decree brings the language, the book, and the hope of life.

So be it."

(Richard R. Adler, University of Montana)

"I would (and do) wish that 'English' as defined by college English departments and 'English' as defined by high school English departments would have more to do with each other than they presently do. In college, a major spends 80% to 90% of his study in English pursuing the 'proper study of literature,' a rather meaningless and vague pursuit. In high school, a student spends so much more of his time in the study of and refinement of his skills in composition and language. There are two startingly different and independently defensible philosophies in operation. I personally (an perhaps traitorously) feel that the college English departments have got to bend more and become more realistic in their preparation programs. However, until high school English departments curtail the faddish changes for the sake of change that proliferate, the colleges are going to be rightfully reluctant to go along. I offer no solutions here, only what I see as the crux of our basic curricular problems. 'There is no solution. Seek it lovingly."

(Bruce C. Appleby, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale)

"An English teacher who reads a minimum of 52 books a year--two-thirds 'adult' literature and one-third 'adolescent' or 'children's' literature and exchanges views and opinions on those books with colleagues. An English teacher who keeps a daily journal and completes at least 12 pieces of 'public writing' each year. One half

of these pieces would be exchanged with colleagues and one half would be submitted for publication. Without English teachers who regularly read and write and talk about their reading and writing with their peers and students, little which is either really new or lasting will happen in English classrooms. Without a changing and 'doing' teacher, the chances for changing and 'doing' classrooms is severely limited."

(Thomas L. Barton, Washington State University)

"I'd wish for a corps of imaginative teachers who know that language is an integral part of the human being, involving not only his words, but his thoughts, and his actions. Their greatest concern would be for the students he meets every day--the whole student--his mind, his feelings, his body. These teachers would realize that language is not separable from all the concerns of humanity and his devotion to the students would cause them to discover themselves, and to recognize their relation with, and their responsibility to all peoples."

(Jewel J. Bindrup, Utah State Board of Education)

"The pressures of accountability, with all of their vexations, may--just may if we're lucky--produce something that is really new in English: systematic collection of evidence of student progress toward goals that English teachers think are the most important. Over the years, we have played the evaluation and assessment ballgame in other people's ballparks, while we railed against externally imposed tests geared to trivial behavior. Maybe now we have been pressured enough so that we will start gathering evidence of student behavior we are really interested in. The NCTE, I understand, is sponsoring a project to collect and make available some of the more ingenious tests produced in various projects such as Curriculum Study centers and then buried in reports few people read. This will help. But the monkey really is on the individual teacher's back. One going into most schools looking for evidence of what is being accomplished in English usually can see some scores on a standardized test of reading skills or writing mechanics, maybe a set of themes or some puppets made in connection with the unit on ROMEO AND JULIET. And that's about it. I'd like to walk into a school and see evidence that students were gaining ability to relate their personal experiences to that in literature, to, say, recognize parallels between Greek tragedy or drama of the absurd and the contemporary social and political scene. But that evidence is hard to come by. I think it can be collected, though, and if it is, that is what would really be new."

(Dwight L. Burton, Florida State University)

"There is a 'closed club' snobbery cherished by many English teachers who like to think of themselves as aesthetically set apart from the rest of their professional colleagues. To ask ourselves, What am I, requires an honesty not often found. How do we view ourselves? As the most exclusive teachers of literature? Isn't the first grade teacher much more a teacher of literature than we are? The third grade teacher works harder at writing then most of us would believe. The seventh grade teacher stands on the edge of excitement over new genres, and the eleventh and twelfth grade teachers think they have the whole job on their shoulders. It seems to me that we need an in-depth experience of our total profession so that we can begin to respect each teacher for his or her professional ability and see all of them as colleagues in one profession. Perhaps this would begin to cure 'job envy' that makes us equate the higher grade with a higher intelligence."

(Lori Clarke, University of Utah)

"I wish we had a new teacher--one who was able to combine a thorough knowledge of hardware and software with a thorough knowledge of the only ware that really matters--the student. This teacher would be able and willing to take time and energy to know

every student and what his needs were. He would be so good that the Powers of of budgets and assignments would give him the space that he needed, the time that he needed the number of students that he needed and even the salary that he needed to accomplish his purposes as a teacher of communication, appreciation, interpretation, heritage-transmitter, etc. Let's stop deceiving ourselves. No teacher is ever going to be super-human enough that the Powers will automatically give him anything. What I really wish for most are teachers of English who know what they need in order to teach and are able and willing to go forth and work for their needs even unto the smelly kitchen of politics. This kind of teacher isn't really new, but God, he's scarce!"

(James E. Davis, Ohio University, Editor of OHIO ENGLISH BULLETIN)

"I'd like to abolish the reliance on one classroom with four walls, twenty-eight students, and one teacher and substitute instead an octagonal shaped multi-purpose room flanked on all eight sides by smaller rooms where 10-12 students could meet. The large room could house tape players, filmviewers and other media equipment and seat 85 students for large-group presentations. Imagine in this satellite facility, three 11th-grade English classes, two teachers, and two teachers' aides. Visualize students involved in, say, a short story unit. The entire group has just viewed the film 'An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge' after reading the Ambrose Bierce short story of the same title. Two groups are meeting with a teacher, one discussing aspects of theme, tone, point of view (and other basic short story elements), and one comparing film and story after reading Ingmar Bergman's 'Film Has Nothing to do With Literature.' One group is meeting with the aid working on problems in sentence mechanics revealed in earlier assignments; the second aid is circulating among students who are discussing papers in various stages of completion, working on individual projects (say, non-verbal interpretations of the short story --collage, sound-tract, etc.), reading future assignments, or completing previous assignments. Such an arrangement would present almost unlimited possibilities for encouraging students' strengths and developing students' weaknesses."

(Darlene Fischer, Miraleste High School, Miraleste, California)

"One who has but a single wish will probably spend it by requesting ten wishes and will cleverly always hold one in reserve to replenish his supply. But that's not playing the game nor is it particularly instructive for those in the real, non-wish world who want to improve their ways of doing things in English classrooms. Therefore, my wish is that every kid in the English classroom know every other kid there and by the end of the third or fourth week of school. Why and how, you ask, or, if you don't, let me assume you do. Why? Students today come to secondary schools from a variety of backgrounds and, in the busy, harried, hectic, workadayandanight world of the school, too rarely make new friends with new interests, too seldom meet those from different neighborhoods and backgrounds, too infrequently make the wide circle of acquaintances they ought legitimately to expect from such prolonged and demanded togetherness. Instead, they sit in rows (or even in circles) without knowing the names of their classmates, much less what makes them tick, turns them on and off, creates their joys and their sorrows. School is impersonal, anonymous for most students not gifted with the cheerleading or football skills that put a few of their number in the limelight. Instead, I'd like to see these students, all of them, the bright, the dull, the handsome, the homely, get to know each other. If they're going to, though, it may well have to be in the English classroom, the one place in the school that legitimizes communication. But how? What about pairing off kids and having them first interview each other, then introduce their partner to the rest of the class? How about a 'class favorites' list on the bulletin board, with favorite tv show, singing group, movie, book, etc. identified by each student? Having students alternate in taking the class attendance will help each link the names and faces of his friends. Role playing and improvisation get students in front of the room and in front of their peers. Periodically using small groups and rotating their membership will facilitate interaction. Most im-

portant of all is lots and lots of class discussion. If these kinds of activities are tried, kids will get to know each other and I can go on to my wishes about more wishes."

(Theodore W. Hipple, University of Florida)

"Rugs, mats, pads, and pillows--or, better, a grassy hillside--instead of tables, chairs, and desks. Genuine conversation. Teachers listening instead of talking. Movement. Students reading books and magazines and one another's writings without being bugged about it. Utter silence, by students' choice. Typewriters and lots of paper. An intercom system by means of which students monitor conversations in the teachers lounge and the administrative offices (so as to be exposed to high-level intellectual discourse). Small kids and animals as daily classroom guests. Cops, physicians, paraplegics, bankers, parents, longshoremen, bagel bakers, octogenarians, convicts, professors, and other real people as occasional guests. Teachers looking forward to retirement on a generous pension after twenty years of service--like professional soldiers. Good food being shared. Books everywhere. Music. Summary execution for anyone who asks, 'What does all this have to do with English?'"

(Jim Hoetker, NCTE/ERIC)

"A much closer fit between the reasons we give our students (and ourselves) for teaching and learning English and the methods and measurements we bring to the evaluation of teaching and learning. I think there's something fundamentally honest about the teacher who says that the thing in English is to master standard written English, and then who tests children on matters like subject-verb agreement. I don't feel that way about the teacher who says the thing in English is to experience the wonder of language and to increase power over it, and who even provides some classroom experiences which might lead to wonder or power or both, but who in the last analysis grades on subject-verb agreement. Nor for that matter, am I much excited about the teacher who promises improved skills but never gets around to finding out if the skills have improved. That's what I think I want: some logical and pedagogical fit between what we say is important and what we reveal by our evaluation that we think is important."

(Robert F. Hogan, Executive Secretary, NCTE)

"My wish for something new for the schools comes from watching a rehearsal of the marching band last fall. The band members were sharp and will-drilled, and the music was loud, precise, and good. Everyone was attentive and aggressive, because everyone knew that sitting along the sidelines were two dozen junior varsity band members, ready to challenge for a regular position in the band. If one of those junior varsity members observed someone missing a step or messing up the music, he could call for a showdown, a head to head marching and playing competition, the winner taking the regular band slot. I wish we had a similar system for teaching courses for a term, being observed regularly by a panel of judges consisting of students and professionals. The winner would take the teaching slot. This scheme would make a lot of tenured teachers very edgy, because a number of them would know that their teaching days were numbered. It would also help to to create job opportunities for the thousands of lively, talented people who are currently being blocked out of the schools. Even if the tenured teacher held on to his job by winning the competition, you can bet his teaching would be improved in the process."

(Stephen Judy, Michigan State University)

"I wish for time. Time to be imaginative. Time to plan and prepare. Time to read the stories, articles and poetry that tantalyze but elude me. Time to read every student paper with care and caring. Time to write--seriously, lightly -- those things which otherwise are lost. Time to explore the new and unknown. Time to share with students and colleagues. Time to pursue and examine sudden insights. Time to evaluate

me. Time to savor experiences so that I don't become brittle like pages in old, unused books."

(Marilyn Kraft, Carl Hayden High School, Phoenix)

"If I had one wish for something new, really new, in the English curriculum, this would be ALL (i.e. 100% of them) English teachers who accept students as human beings with their individual knowledge and skills and smells and language; who know something about the teaching of reading; who have an extensive background in all the areas -- especially the new ones -- of linguistics; who know and adore poets, especially some contemporary ones; who can work with whole classes of kids, whole large classes of kids, small groups of kids and individual kids -- not to mention working with fellow teachers; who are clever and imaginative; who can comfortably change their teaching methods, their class schedules, their room arrangements and their hair appointments; who can see recent movies, who readreadread. You did say wish, didn't you?"

(Dorothy Olson, Lincoln, Nebraska, Public Schools)

"My 'druthers' for every English classroom is really a two-in-one wish. I have long seen the need for a preparation period in the school day for elementary teachers. I also have been convinced that the best in-service education has been the each one-teach one plan. I arranged a series of in-service meetings last year. They were held after a long teaching day for both the instructor and the teacher participants. Everyone agreed that the presentations had been interesting and helpful. Almost everyone expressed the opinion, 'Isn't it a shame that so few are here?' or 'Why can't we observe and learn from these teachers in their own classrooms?' When most persons mention the need for a teacher preparation period, they usually mean a time free to prepare (or correct) materials for their students. This time is undoubtedly needed. But if instruction in English is to improve measurably, some of this preparation time needs to be for the preparation of the teacher, herself or himself."

(Virginia Reid, Past President, NCTE, Oakland, California)

"You don't have to be dumb to take a reading course in high school. Or do you? It would seem that brain damage is a prerequisite for allowing oneself to enter the stigmatized reading program offered in many English departments.

What would be wrong with developing and advertising the essential value of a course for seemingly normal students who are not reading with crystal-clear comprehension?

What is more vital to success in school than the ability to make sense out of the written word? Certainly the mind benefits from exercise, and reading is exercise.

Consider the value of success experiences. It is exhilarating for the student to make a breakthrough, to understand the mass of letters curiously arranged before him on the page.

Challenging the mind is one thing, leading it to understanding is another. If a student can not comprehend an assignment, he cannot complete the assignment. If he does not complete his work, he will not enjoy his work. If his work is learning . . .

Our task is not to confuse, but to enlighten. Let's push the necessity of reading for comprehension. Let's construct our courses in a way that will help students to discern and want to discern what they read. Let's offer reading courses for all levels, not just for the severly handicapped reader."

(Scott Roti, Marcos de Niza High School, Tempe)

"The boob tube has been about as welcome to some English teachers as a karate chop to the back of the neck. Many believe that T.V. will destroy or at least warp the minds of the young who not even secretly find more enjoyment, creativity, and enthusiasm in the commercials than they do in their English lessons. And to add insult to injury is the kid who can sing every advertising jingle and knows intimately the life history of countless T.V. characters but can't spell his own name twice the same way on the same day. Maybe someday we'll get

the message. Maybe we'll finally get the message that within our grasp is the creativity, the enthusiasm, the methods by which we can turn our classrooms into places of enjoyment, anticipation, and learning."

(Emmett Smith, Apollo High School, Glendale and ASU)

"What all of us need in the English curriculum are better ways of monitoring student progress in oral language development and visual literacy. A clearer understanding of developmental stages associated with these competencies would help all teachers in planning more effective instruction for individuals. Our inability to clarify desired student performance--and the lack of manageable tools to assess pupil progress--inevitably leads to confusion in program planning, overemphasis on those abilities more easily measured, and neglect of such important dimensions of our curriculum in English."

(James R. Squire, Senior Vice President and Editor in Chief, Ginn and Company, and Former Executive Secretary, NCTE)

"A teacher with partial amnesia-unable to remember the way it's s'pposed to be or hear haunting voices of past teachers doing grammar drills, lecturing on the shape of the Shakespearian stage or giving a theme assignment to write 'What I Did On My Summer Vacation.' 'Duty,' 'responsibility,' 'dedication' and 'work for a grade' replaced in his vocabulary by 'joy,' 'honesty,' 'experience' and 'rigor with a purpose.' No scowling figure, red pencil behind his ear, back bent from a perpetually over-loaded briefcase, but a lilt in his voice, a spring in his step and an adolescent novel, a word game, a movie reel tuched between the classics in his knapsack. A man pursuing life, literature, kids and their connective links."

(Lou Willett Stanek, Assistant English MAT Coordinator, The University of Chicago)

"A world of peace and justice for all has been the goal of mankind for many centuries. Today, when we have the capability of destroying the planet in hundreds of creative ways, we are faced with the choice of a world of peace and justice for all or no world for anybody. I feel that the English profession could make a great contribution toward providing the next generation with basic skills to deal with the global conflicts they will face. As the world rapidly shrinks in size, we have a tremendous need to understand the background of people of other countries, and literature provides the cheapest and one of the most effective methods of understanding the perspective of a person in another culture. The ability to analyze problems logically and to see through prejudices and stereotypes is another skill which our profession can provide for the next generation. Communication skills, including awareness of other people's points of view, techniques of resolving conflicts, and recognizing manipulative techniques, will also be needed desperately if world and national conflicts are not to degenerate into violence."

(Barbara Stanford, Author/Educational Consultant, Boulder, Colorado)

CURRENT READING: A Scholarly and Pedagogical Bibliography of Articles and Books, Recent and Old, on New Ways of Looking at the English Curriculum

The following bibliography may help English teachers find some articles and books on some new ideas and problems and practices concerning the English curriculum. Anyone who has looked at the massive amount of material on accountability alone will recognize how limited and tentative the following bibliography is. These books and articles are pretty well limited to materials specifically related to English and English teaching.

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SHOPTALK: A Column of Brief Ideas and Sundry Thoughts about New Ways of Looking at the English Curriculum

Some fascinating brief comments about some real problems in the English curriculum today are given by James Moffett in his "Who Counts?" in the April 1972 ENGLISH JOURNAL. Below are just a few squibs from a fine article.

"Personal responsibility is to fiscal accountability as lovemaking is to a gynecological examination. . .

No administrator or teacher can possibly exert enough control over learning results to be held truly accountable for them and must therefore, to protect his livelihood, resort to measures that inevitably impair learning.

If I'm to be held accountable for my students' performance, then I must be granted powers far exceeding any ever accorded teachers heretofore--to control the materials purchased, the methods permitted, learning sites, scheduling, grouping and mixing, style and atmosphere, and to abolish censorship, centralized adoption and curriculum determination, grammar teaching (though it cost the superintendent his job), and grades and testing (though it render accountability itself difficult to implement). . .

The first rule of evaluation is that the means of measuring must never dictate, displace, or distort what is being measured, but no public school system now honors this rule. . .

Whenever a performance contractor cannot succeed by juggling numbers, teaching directly to the payoff tests, eliminating all learning but the payoff targets, showing temporary short-term gains, or bribing students to do their cheating for him, he has only to avail himself of all those powers especially granted to him but denied to regular personnel--to waive the usual curriculum and bureaucratic routines and to choose his own methods, materials, setting, scheduling, staffing dispositions, etc. . .

The job of schools is not to prescribe what should be learned but to facilitate how to learn anything, from which it follows that statements of specific objectives and of performance criteria for ringing a bell when they have been reached are pointless and can only impede reaching the main goal. . .

Accountability is a red herring used to cover up real problems such as tax inequities; the exploitation of schools for jobs, markets, and votes; the strengthening of Federal centralization and Presidential control; and the diversion of public money into such powerfully lobbied private sectors as the defense industry. . .

It is the learner who should be developing performance criteria--to find out what happens when he says things this way or writes things that way--by having constant opportunities to get and give reactions about language action.

If the main goal of education is, precisely, to learn how to set and reach goals, then the more that adults do this for children, instead of helping them develop good judgment in making decisions, then the more the adults are robbing children of their education to solve their own problems, which, for lack of such an education themselves, they do not know how to solve any other way."

Some indication of the public view of teachers and their need (or lack of justifiable need) for decent size classes is given in an editorial ("Individual Attention--A Myth") in the May 8, 1972, PHOENIX GAZETTE. What do you think of these words?

"An annual dispute between high school teachers and a school district involves student-teacher ratio. The teachers' theory--or that of their representatives--is that any increase in students per teacher means the loss of "individual attention" and thus a decline in educational opportunities. The generalized argument is fallacious.

The Phoenix Union High School District Classroom Teachers Association has charged that any increase in student-teacher ratio 'means that each student gets less

attention.' A district researcher has statistics to show that "the larger classes may just as well be superior, particularly in terms of achievement." That, too, is a generalization.

The only way a student can get true 'individual attention' is to have a tutor, which is not possible in a public school. Once a class grows beyond a handful of students, then individual attention is more fancy than fact. Teaching is considerably more difficult--and much more an art form--than tutoring.

In any discussion of student-teacher ratios, it is necessary to talk specifics. The lower ratios is more a factor in math, English and shop classes, for example, than it is in a lecture class. A small English-grammar class would be most desirable; a class in English literature could be limitless because in some areas of study individual attention is of no consideration.

Another factor that is sometimes overlooked in the ratio wrangle is the quality of the teacher. Educators cannot learn for children; they are, or should be, leaders in the experience. A teacher who can light the educational fires under 30 youngsters can easily do the same for 35.

To cite a student-teacher ratio and say that it is either good or bad is meaningless. Numerical rules are useless. It should be a matter of educational common sense that allows flexibility for a great cause--learning."

"But the great danger today in curriculum reform in English is the direction that such unrest seems likely to take. Our schools are overrun with professional educational innovators who seem not to see the forest for the trees. The new technology; new cost accounting methods of determining effectiveness of teachers; glamorous patterns of team teaching, seminar sessions, and independent study on the scale foreseen in the new report of the Committee on Economic Development; the even more arresting use of computers in learning; will come to naught in the hands of those concerned with manipulating administrative variables if they are not led by those with intimate knowledge of subject and student.

Excellence and innovation in English teaching is not and cannot be dependent upon the organization of a knowledge factory, however efficiently it may be run. Rather, to borrow a phrase of Charles Muscatine, "It depends less on specific curricula innovation than on a change in the stance of men." We can use the machines and the technological assistance, and the new organizational patterns in their own way. And surely, we can use small seminar discussion sessions and independent study, if they free teachers and students alike to contribute to our new purpose. But more than anything else we need a clearer awareness of what is basic to real innovation in the teaching of our subject. In no other way can we achieve true excellence in our programs."

(James R. Squire, "Excellence, Innovation, and the Transformation of the English Curriculum," CALIFORNIA ENGLISH JOURNAL, Oct. 1969, p. 11)

In an article that teachers ought to carefully read and consider, Harold G. Shane's "Looking to the Future: Reassessment of Educational Issues of the 1970s," PHI DELTA KAPPAN, Jan. 1973, the author proposes some ideas for curriculum content. "At the moment let us forget the three R's, since there seem to be few advocates of basic illiteracy, and assume that the schools will, without much squabbling, continue to promote reading and ciphering. Let us ask instead, What are the 'Big Questions' as to content for 1973-85? While the schools traditionally have provided a basis rather than an arena for social change, accumulating data suggest that at least a few crucial topics need to be phased into the curriculum beginning no later than during the primary school years. Specifically, there are <u>future</u>-oriented skills input, and attitudes that need to become a part of the personal resources that young citizens bring to bear on the problems that confront us all. To serve this end:

1. Schooling needs to focus on the dangers that ruthless exploitation of resources pollution, warfare, and waste are creating for mankind.

2. The curriculum needs to become more specific in recognizing that the rate of population increase is a real and present threat now, not in the third millenium.
3. Young learners should begin to ponder the point that maintaining the U.S. standard of living as of 1972 requires processing about 65% of the world's annual output of raw materials for the 6% of the world's population residing in our 50 states.
4. Deliberate study should be made of mass media--especially inevitable misrepresentation because TV can't actually show us the world "the way it is." We also need to help the young to understand the propaganda power and image-building impact of press and screen; the passive, mind-numbing aspects of being forever a spectator of, rather than a participant in, the beat of life.
5. As noted earlier, a great effort should be made through school experiences to build the personal inner strength, discipline, and self-control that enable a human being to live effectively in a climate of mutual trust and respect with his fellows.
6. Much more thought should be given to developing with and for the young learner a future-focused role image, a projected self-concept of what he can become in 10, 20, and 30 years hence and which promises the merited respect, dignity, and a measure of security needed to motivate the learner now."

In the February 1972 MICHIGAN ENGLISH TEACHER, Steve Judy suggests five things English teachers could do when "the behaviorist comes."

"Active Resistance. If you feel that the writing of behavioral objectives will be harmful to your teaching, state your objections clearly and strongly. . .Even if one loses the fight, 'active resistance' serves an important purpose, because it makes all of the people concerned more aware of the problems (and the potential) of behavioral objectives. . .

Minimum Compliance. As a friend who teaches by minimum compliance once told me: 'I spend two weeks 'covering' what they want 'covered'; the rest of the year I do what I think is important.

Writing Humanistic Objectives. Many teachers have found it more convenient to work within the system and to translate their own beliefs and values into 'humanistic' behavioral objectives which move beyond the basic skills into the areas of creativity, response to literature, and style and form in writing.

Creating Alternative Systems. An alternative system I have explored is the 'activity list.' At the beginning of the term you list, in as much detail as possible, all of the activities--reading, writing, listening, speaking--in which you expect to engage students during the course, and to it you attach an explanation of why you feel these activities are useful ones for young people. . .The completed checklist is an administrator's delight, since it shows, moment by moment, what you have been doing, and it can also help you see and evaluate the dimensions of your teaching.

Counter-Accountability (or, Biting the Hand That Feeds You). When an administrator tells you he wants a list of behavioral objectives, ask to see his! Does he have a list? Are his objectives properly stated? Can they be measured accurately? How does he plan to involve his teachers in the assessment of his success or failure? How will the students be involved in evaluation? What penalties is he prepared to pay if he doesn't meet his own goals?. . ."

Worried about national assessment? Read this.

"One of the exercises in the first (national) assessment required 13 year olds to respond to the following statement: 'Literature is a school subject that is taught in many schools. Sometimes it is studied in English classes. It is important to study literature in school.' The exercise provided five possible responses, ranging from strong agreement with the statement to strong disagreement. . .

Fewer than half of the 13 year olds (43 percent in fact) strongly agreed with the statement. There is some encouragement in the fact that 34 percent agreed some what, but that still leaves about one-fourth of the 13 year olds either undecided or in disagreement with the proposition that it is important to study literature in school. Moreover, when asked to give reasons for their agreement. . . with the statement, about 70 percent of the children indicated that literature is only important for utilitarian reasons. . .There were a few of course, who said that literature increases awareness of other people's opinions, social problems, and history; one even wrote that 'it allows you to 'live' other people's experiences.' But by and large, even those 13 year olds who expressed strong agreement with the statement did not justify their fervor very convincingly. . .

When the same exercise was administered to 17 year olds, 90 percent of them strongly agreed that it is important to teach literature in school, and 9 percent 'agreed somewhat'. . .These figures represent an impressive change in attitude. Of this 90 percent who believe literature is important, 60 percent gave acceptable reasons for their agreement. A large proportion of their reasons were still utilitarian, but a great many more. . .cited literature's role in achieving self-understanding, expanding the sensibilities, and broadening one's tolerance of new and different ideas. A few even suggested that reading literature is fun. This shift in attitude from age 13 to 17 may well indicate that high school English is a positive experience for most teenagers. But all studies of this sort can elicit two reactions: one can be pleased that most 17 year olds acknowledge the importance of literature in the curriculum or disturbed that 40 percent are unable to explain that importance. So it is, throughout the four volumes of literature assessment results: there is information here that may be from one point of view encouraging, from another, discouraging. . .Each reader will have to sift through the results and, according to his experience with students and convictions about research in this area, make his or her own judgement about the usefulness of the data. . .The assessment will not answer all or even many of the questions people may have about the current status and general direction of literary understanding in America; but it does generate discussion, promote research, and encourage the development of measurement tools that may better enable us to understand the needs and capabilities of our students.' (In CONVENTION CONCERNS--1972, speeches from the Minneapolis NCTE meeting, Nov. 1972, p. 9. J. Stanley Ahmann, Rexford Brown, National Assessment of Educational Progress, Denver, Colorado).

A nasty and delightful spoof on behavioral objectives is Frank Coen's "Behavioral Objectives and All" in the May 1972 MEDIA AND METHODS. According to Coen, he'd attended a workshop in behavioral objectives and returned to write up some affective objectives for THE CATCHER IN THE RYE.

"Well, to make a long story short, I wrote up some behavioral objectives for THE CATCHER IN THE RYE, and I'll write them up here the way they do things like that in the ENGLISH JOURNAL and magazines like that.

BEHAVIORAL OBJECTIVES

Affective Domain

Novel: THE CATCHER IN THE RYE, Salinger. After a thorough reading of this novel, the students should be able to:

1. contribute a little goddam flavor to class discussions.
2. bring a little girl like Phoebe to class and discuss her crazy notebooks.
3. bring a big girl like Sunny to class and discuss her crazy prices.
4. bring an elevator boy like old Maurice to class and punch him in the stomach.
5. bring some Spic&Span to class and erase all the profanities from the walls and all.

You'll be happy to learn that everything worked out quite well, although number five took a little longer than expected; the teachers' lounge was really pretty messed up. I must admit, though, that there were some very interesting remarks there about school boards and the National Council of Teachers of English and all. After this, we worked out some behavioral objectives for some other things we intended to read, like THE MILL ON THE FLOSS, COUPLES, and the sermons of John Henry Newman."

If the word objectives has become sickeningly repetitive in the last few years, the objectives in Alan C. Purves' HOW PORCUPINES MAKE LOVE: NOTES ON A RESPONSE-CENTERED CURRICULUM are worth the English teacher's time and effort, if that teacher is sincerely interested in a student-centered curriculum.

"FOUR OBJECTIVES OF A RESPONSE-CENTERED PROGRAM

a. An individual will feel secure in his response to a poem and not be dependent on someone else's response. An individual will trust himself.

b. An individual will know why he responds the way he does to a poem--what in him causes that response and what in the poem causes that response. He will get to know himself.

c. An individual will respect the responses of others as being as valid for them as his is for him. He will recognize his differences from other people.

d. An individual will recognize that there are common elements in people's responses. He will recognize his similarity with other people."

An old but still relevant and viable and meaningful (and all that other good educational stuff) book is Willard Waller's THE SOCIOLOGY OF TEACHING, first published in 1932. The title may sound dull, but the book isn't. Hearken to these words.

"Teachers are paid agents of cultural diffusion. They are hired to carry light into dark places. . .Not only must the teacher know enough to teach the youngsters in the schools competently according to the standards of the community, but he must, usually, be a little beyond his community. From this it follows that the teacher must always be a little discontented with the community he lives in. The teacher is a martyr to cultural diffusion. (p. 40)

It is part of the American credo that school teachers reproduce by budding. (p. 45)

From the ideal point of view, parents and teachers have much in common, in that both, supposedly, wish things to occur for the best interests of the child; but, in fact, parents and teachers usually live in a condition of mutual distrust and enmity. Both wish the child well, but it is such a different kind of well that conflict must inevitably arise over it. The fact seems to be that parents and teachers are natural enemies, predestined each for the disconfiture of the other. The chasm is frequently covered over, for neither parents nor teachers wish to admit to themselves the uncomfortable implications of their animosity, but on occasion it can make itself clear enough. (p. 68)

It is obvious that the teacher must be free in his teaching, and that some sort of code must govern both his use of that freedom and attempts by members of the community to interfere with it. It is certain that any advanced thinker will get away from the opinion of the generality of men, and some way needs to be found to insure the teacher freedom in his official utterances. Yet it is obviously unethical for the teacher to use his classroom technique as a vehicle for spreading the doctrines of some tangential group to which he belongs (although the teacher has a perfect right to belong to tangential groups). And it would be too much to expect any community to support a school which spread doctrines too far at variance with the opinion of the community. The education that liberates from community opinion must proceed indirectly and imperceptibly or it cannot proceed at all. It would be possible, however, to work out a code of academic freedom which protected the teacher in the discharge of his teaching

functions, but likewise prevented abuse of that freedom."(p. 455)

What is education? That's an obvious and much discussed question, but if you'd like a relatively simple answer, read the editorial below which appeared in the August 25, 1972, TEMPE DAILY NEWS.

"BRAIN FACTORIES

This is a time of year when editorialists are prone to preach the story of little Johnnies and Janes trekking to school for the first time, leaving tearful parents standing at the family doorstep. We're switching, however, to education facilities, and closing with a query. . .'WHO is educated?'

If ever there is a fortunate community, educationally, it is Tempe. Here we possess nursery schools, kindergartens, grammar schools, three high schools and twelve colleges that comprise a university. To these public institutions must be added parochial schools and services of private tutors.

Only the stupid would remark that we here in Tempe lack facilities for an education. These facilities may be equalled elsewhere, but they certainly cannot be surpassed!

Ralph Waldo Emerson in 1831 wrote: 'The things taught in schools and colleges are not an education, but the means to an education.'

Tempe and Arizona have done well in providing good schools in abundance, and proficient staffs of teachers and administrators to operate these schools. What puzzles many a parent is: 'With all these fine facilities doing their intended jobs, how can a person really determine if his child has become truly educated?'

To sort of help us, TDN calls on a professor in Chicago who is reported to have given a certain test to his pupils. The professor first told his pupils that they were not really educated unless they could say YES to all these questions:

--Has your education given you sympathy with all good causes and made you espouse them?

--Has it made you public-spirited?

--Has it made you a brother to the weak?

--Have you learned how to make friends and to keep them?

--Do you know what it is to be a friend yourself?

--Can you look an honest man or a pure woman straight in the eye?

--Do you see anything to love in a little child?

--Will a lonely dog follow you down the street?

--Can you be high-minded and happy in the meaner drudgeries of life?

--Do you think washing dishes and hoe-ing corn just as compatible with high thinking as piano playing or golf?

--Are you good for anything to yourself? Can you be happy alone?

--Can you look out on the world and see anything but dollars and cents?

--Can you look into a mud puddle by the wayside and see anything in the puddle but mud?

--Can you look into the sky at night and see beyond the stars?

--Can your soul claim relationship with the Creator?

We sincerely believe that if the children can answer, affirmatively, upon graduation, all these questions, they are truly educated. And hard-earned dollars spent for local 'brain factories' will be money well spent!"

"English teachers, mindful of the old saying about doctors of medicine that a quack is one who guarantees results, wish to forestall quackery in education by pointing out that there is no way of guaranteeing the results of medical treatment. The doctor can foresee the results of the chain smoker's behavior and can advise him to give up smoking, but the physician is not, in fairness, to be held accountable if the patient lights up in the corridor as he leaves or at the bar on the corner with his friends. No more can teachers force behavior on students or control the

society in which they move. No one can predict what a child will learn or when he will learn it. Who but a charlatan would venture to guarantee any particular behavior of human beings?" (James Duggins, position paper for Central California Council of Teachers of English, quoted in PHI DELTA KAPPAN, March 1972, and swiped from the May 1972 NCTE COUNCIL-GRAMS)

"It's the rare school district these days that can't point to at least one 'experimental' program or trendy innovation. Last month I was asked to talk to a state convention of English teachers on the topic: 'What's new in English education? Student-centered, process-centered, experience-centered curricula--teaching strategies of the 'NOW' scene.' I always feel a little queasy hearing phrases like 'the NOW scene,' and by now students, too, must despair at hearing teachers trying to be 'with it' or 'telling it like it is.'

I worry about these students--about their insularity, about their sometimes paradoxical alienation from what was meant to be 'individualized' learning: the individualized student plugged into his learning module in electronic isolation, making tick marks in a programmed text; the individualized student doing independent study over a third lunch in the cafeteria; the individualized student who, facing more than one would-be Socrates, can register only sheer bafflement at the non-teacher's nondirection. . . .

I think it's time for some of us who have been, and still are, deeply committed to reaching the individual student to acknowledge that in our zeal to tap his unique inner potential we have too often forgotten that he is a social being as well; too often seen him as suffering the nonfulfillment of his inmost needs and interests because of the school's slavish reliance on group-oriented plans and procedures. Even the most fleeting observation of adolescent life and development should have told us that the teenager is extremely aware of his social context--that he needs feedback from his peers. . . . After a decade of Do-Your-Own-Thing, then--one which has seen the rise of programmed instruction, reading labs, independent study, phase electives, and the 'free' school; one which has attempted to make education meaningful to individual, 'reluctant' learners--perhaps out topic today should rather be 'Learning for students reluctant to be individually instructed' or, simply, 'How to reinvent the group.'. . .

It is a good thing in education to acknowledge the paramount necessity of individualizing learning, of breaking down arbitrary constraints and time-worn procedures and expectations. It is good that we want to free students to learn how and what they need to learn. But to do only this will be a disservice to the truth of our students' lives. We cannot ignore the social context in which they move--the classroom--and the rich, familial ambience it can have when a teacher dares to lead. The classroom is a kind of congregation, a coming together for the discovery and study of the truth--about ourselves as individuals, certainly, but about each other, too."

(In CONVENTION CONCERNS -- 1972, speeches from the Minneapolis NCTE meeting, Nov. 1972, p. 25, Alan Teplitsky, Director, Media Workshop, Trenton, NJ)